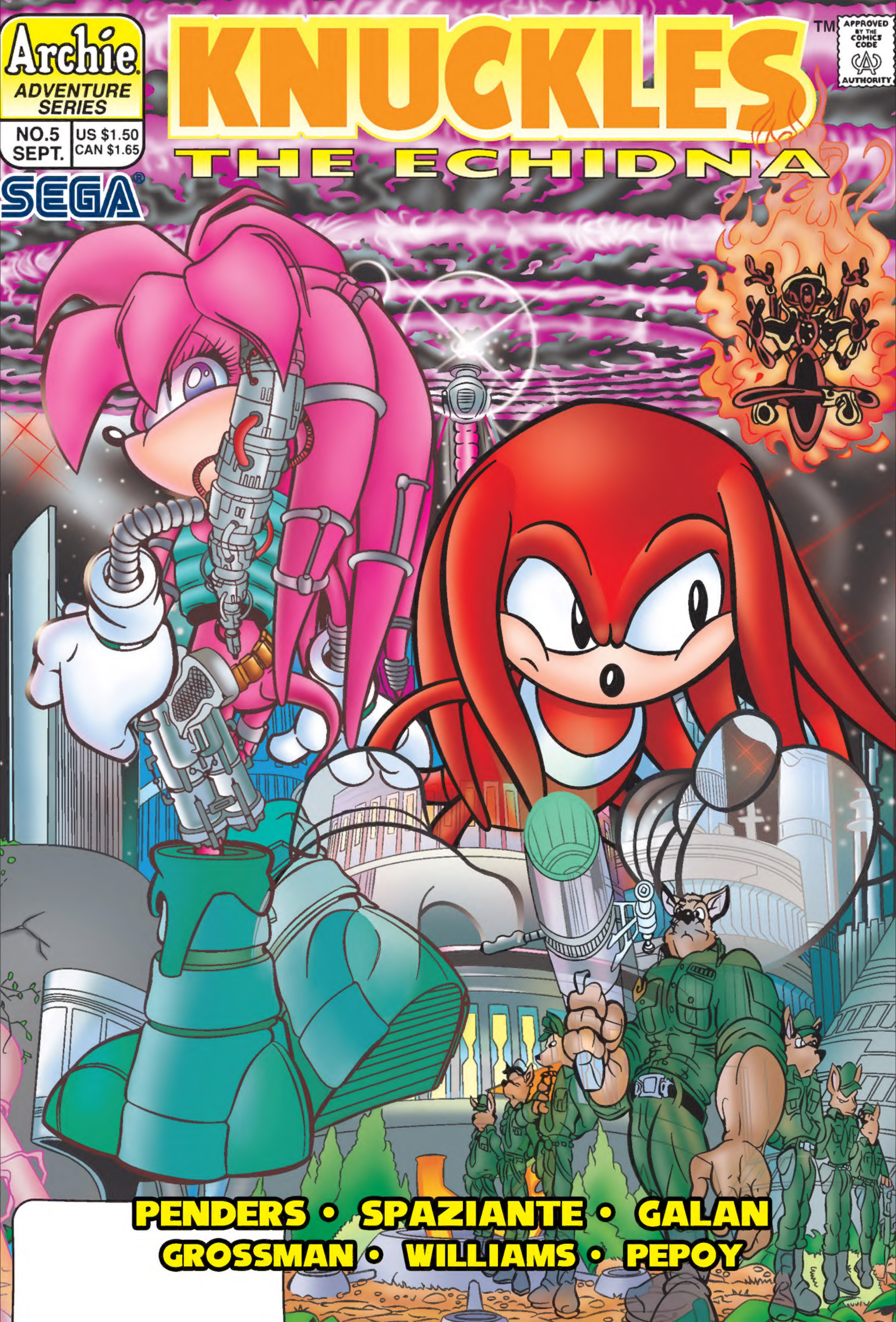




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KNUCKLES™ THE ECHIDNA BOOK FIVE



LOST PARADISE PART TWO OF THREE

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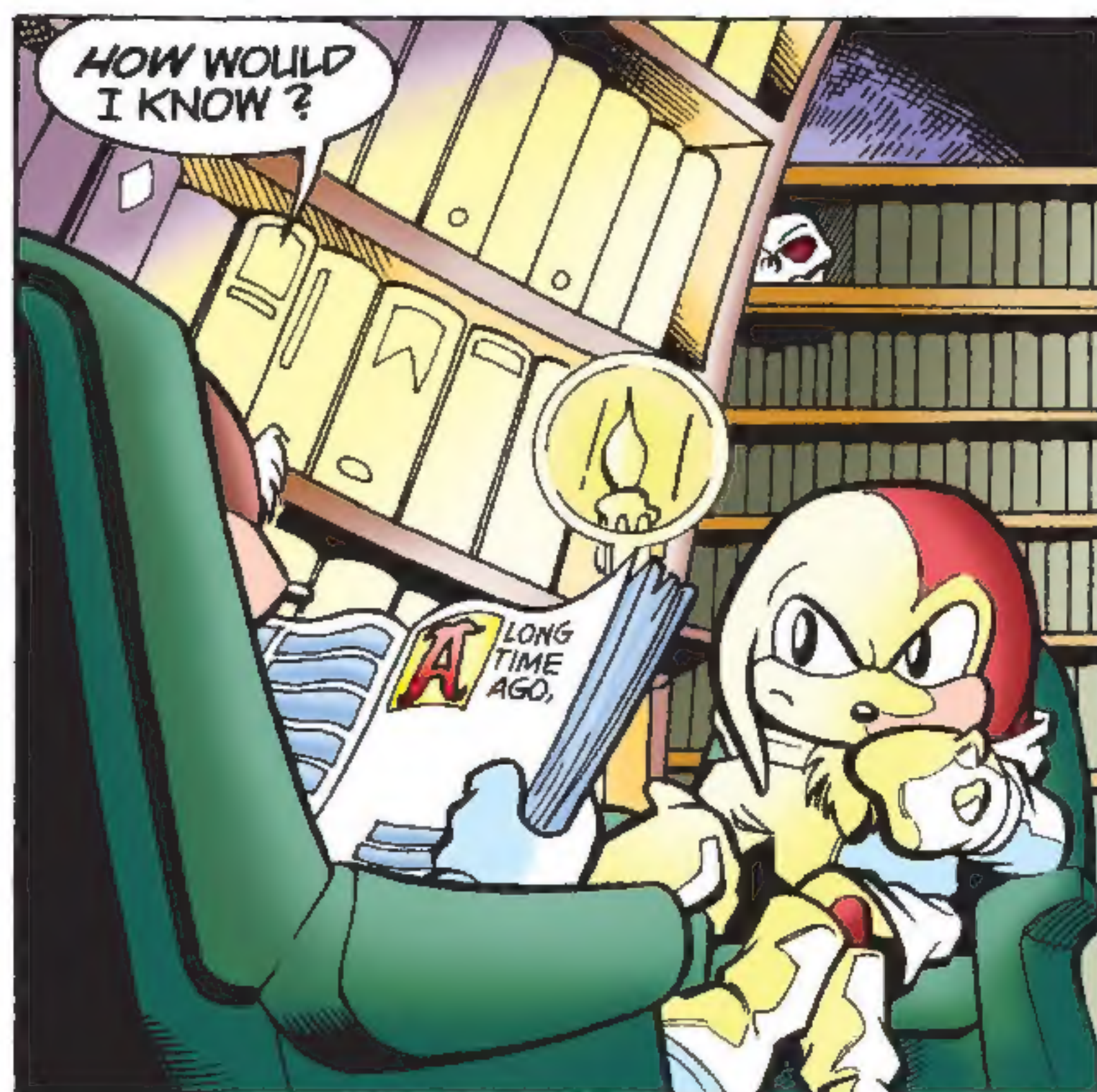
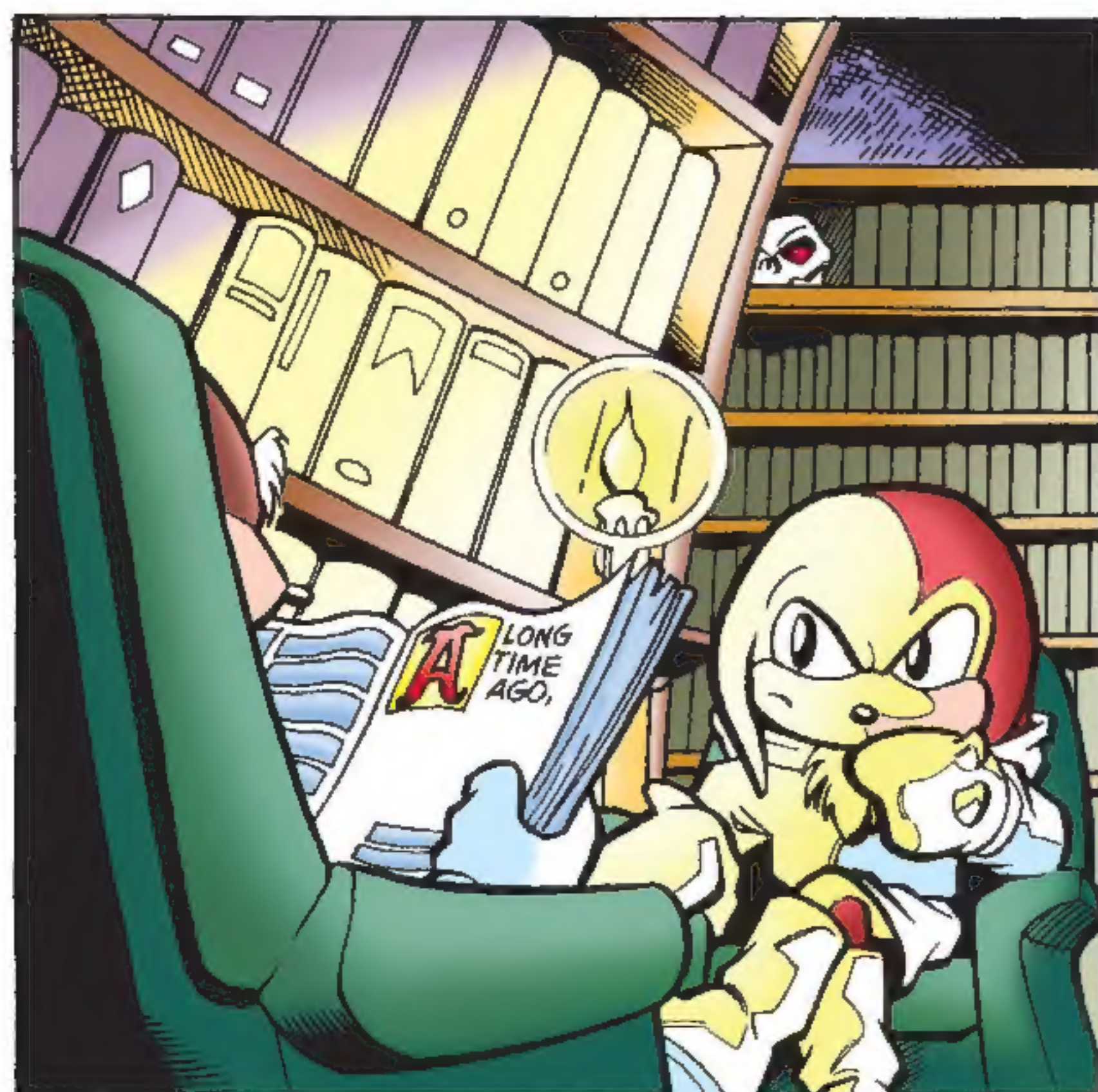
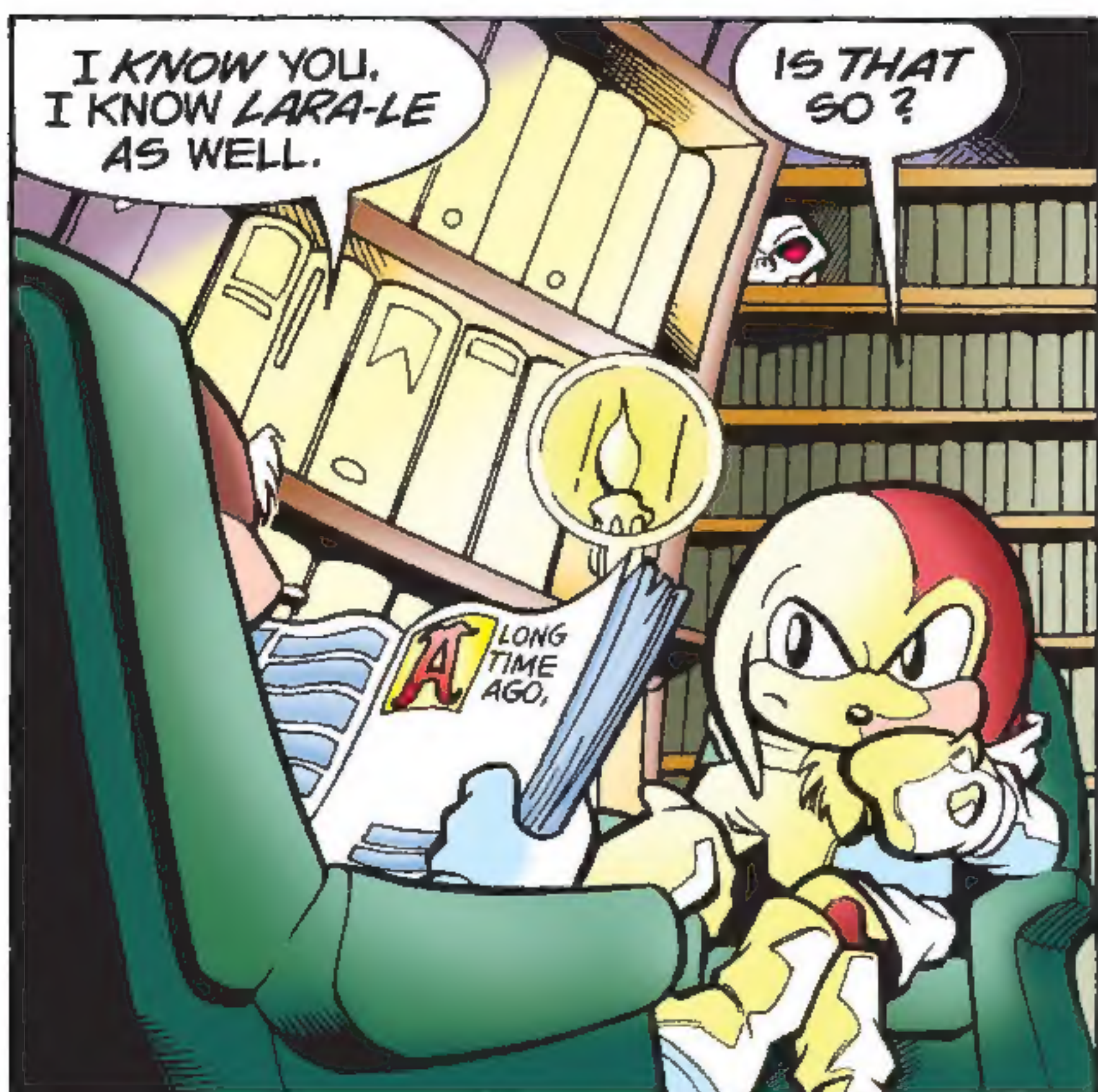
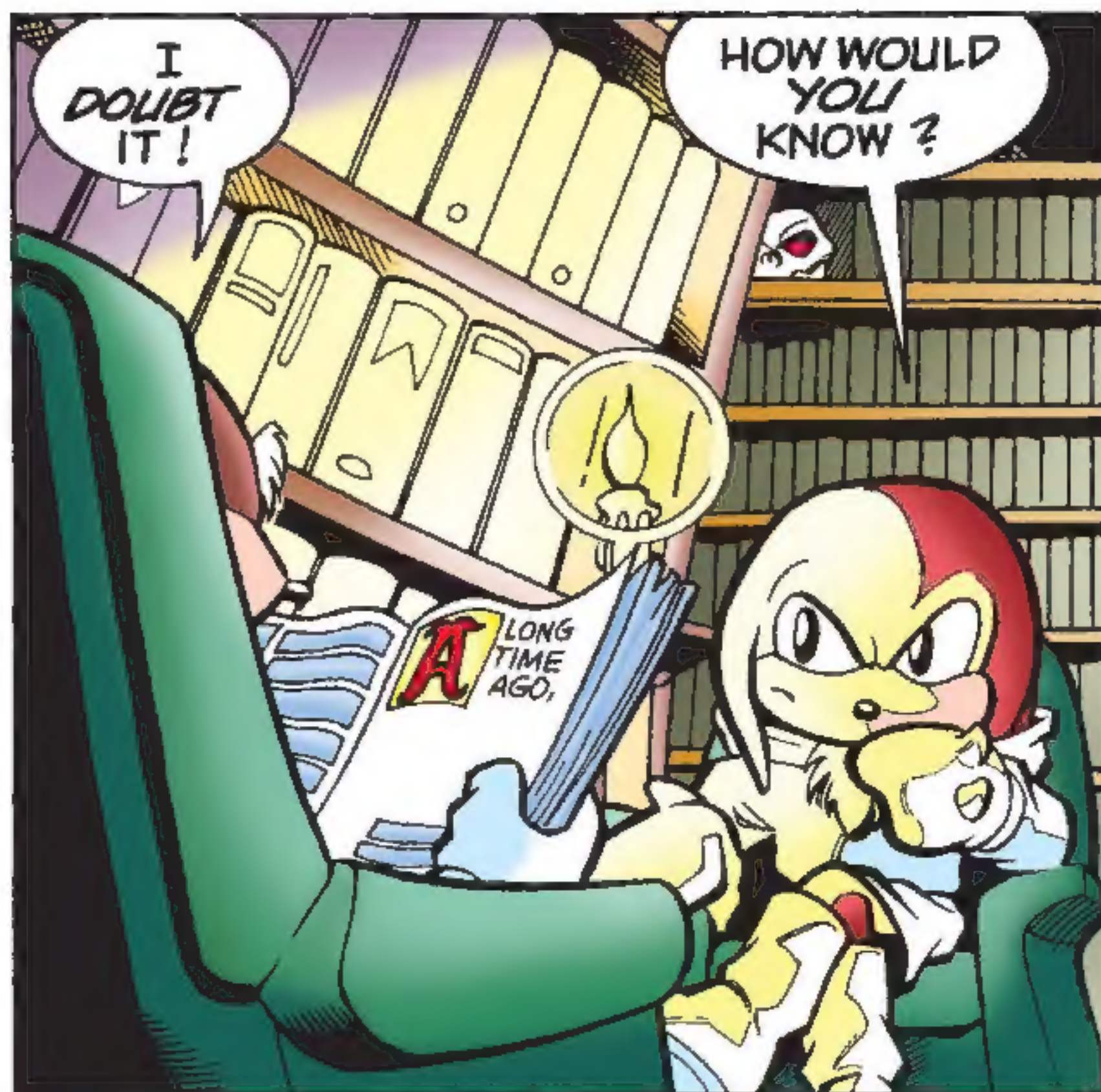
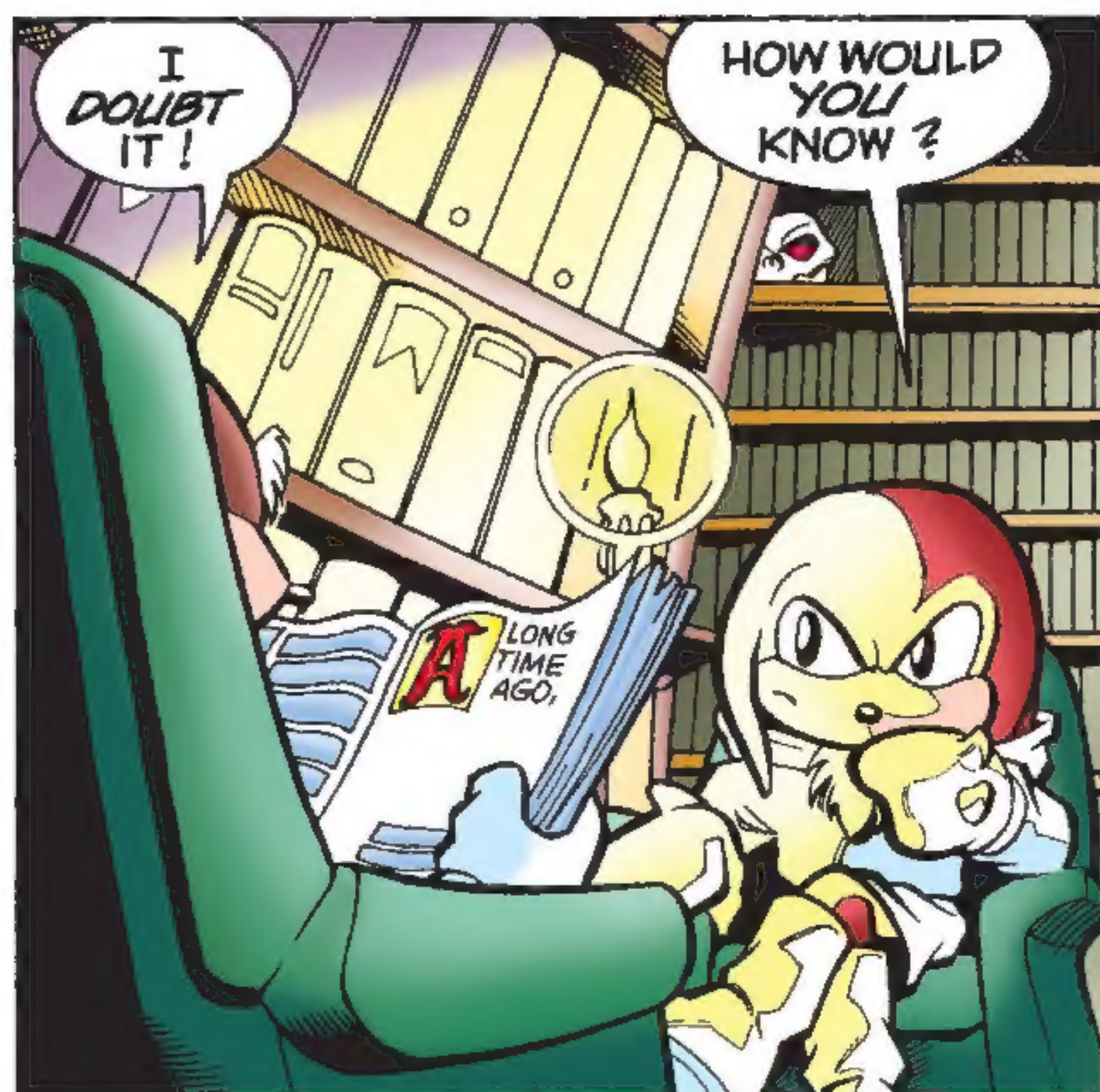
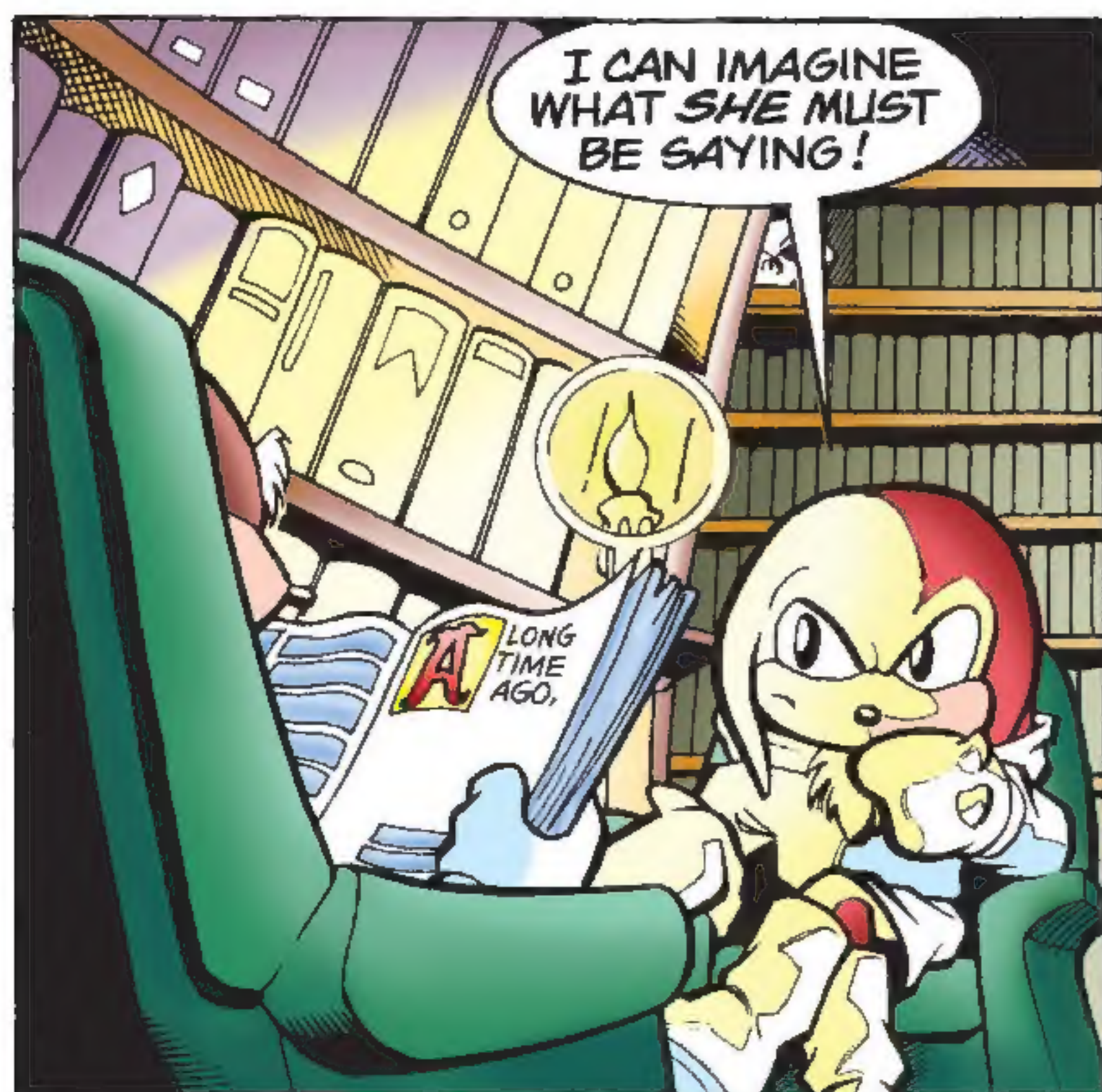
**VICTOR
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**RICHARD
GOLDWATER**
Editor-In-Chief

**IMAGINE GROWING UP MOSTLY ALONE,
WITH THE BELIEF YOU ARE THE LAST OF YOUR KIND,
NEVER HAVING A FRIEND JUST LIKE YOU.
YOU MAY NOT LIKE IT. YOU MAY EVEN RESENT IT.
YOU DO, HOWEVER, LEARN TO DEAL WITH IT.**

**THIS HAS BEEN KNUCKLES' REALITY FOR MOST
OF HIS LIFE. NOW, UPON REDISCOVERING
THE LOST CITY OF ECHIDNAOPOLIS, IT BEGINS TO
DAWN ON HIM THAT LIFE AS HE KNEW IT WAS JUST
AN ILLUSION. WITH HIS TRAVELING COMPANIONS,
ARCHIMEDES AND JULIE-SU, SERVING AS CONSTANT
REMINDERS THAT THERE STILL REMAINS
A LOT HE DOESN'T KNOW OR UNDERSTAND,
KNUCKLES SEEKS OUT THE ANSWERS TO THE
QUESTIONS THAT CONTINUE TO HAUNT HIM.**

**WHAT HE FINDS WILL BE MORE
THAN HE BARGAINED FOR...**



"I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND
HER ANY MORE THAN I DID
MY BELOVED JENNA."

Y'KNOW, IT
WOULD BE NICE
IF SOMEONE WOULD
EXPLAIN WHAT'S
GOING ON.

YES, SIR!
CONSTABLE
REMINGTON IS TAKING
THEM INTO THE
BRIEFING ROOM RIGHT
NOW!

I'LL
SEE THAT HE
GETS YOUR
MESSAGE!

LIBRARY

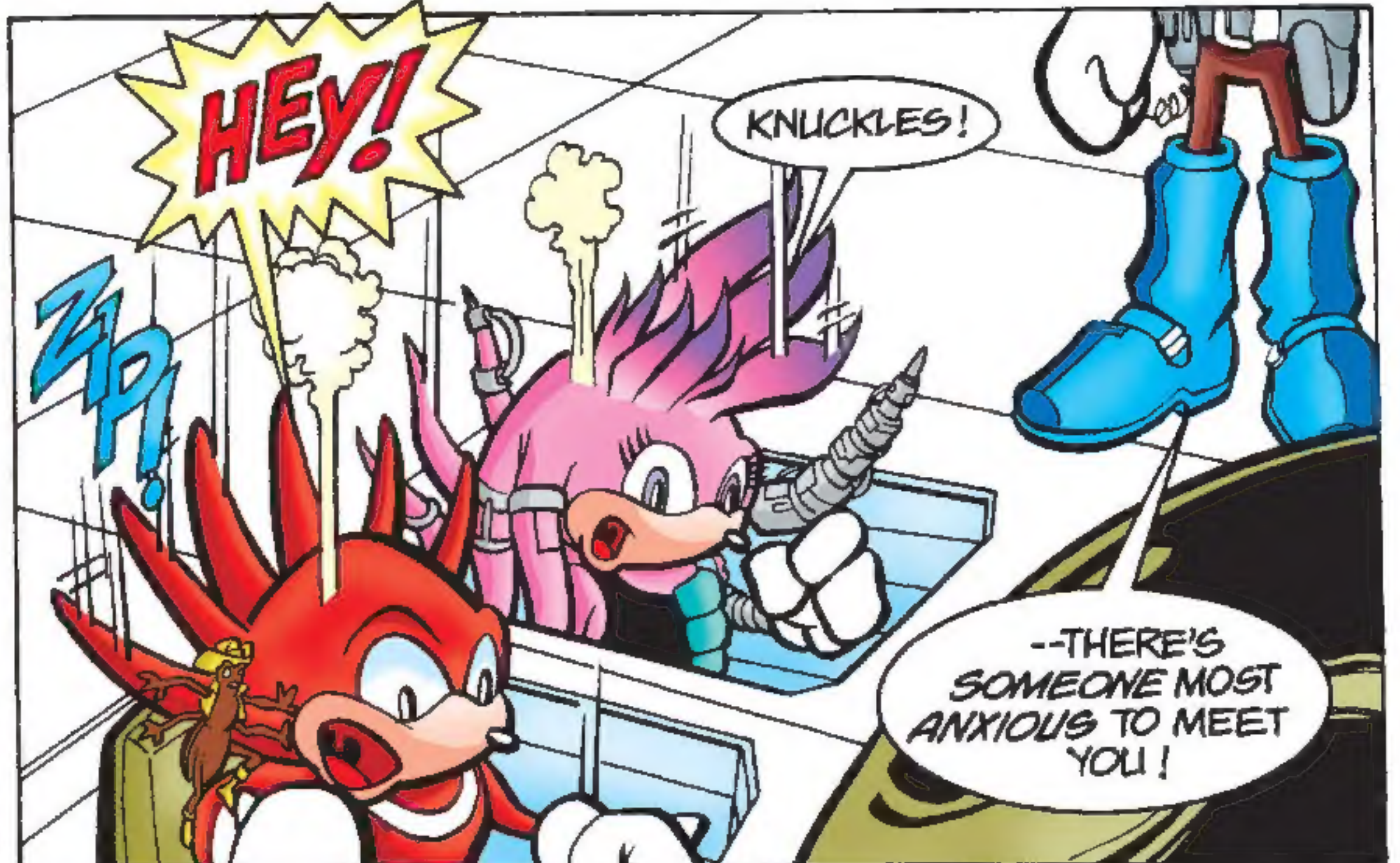
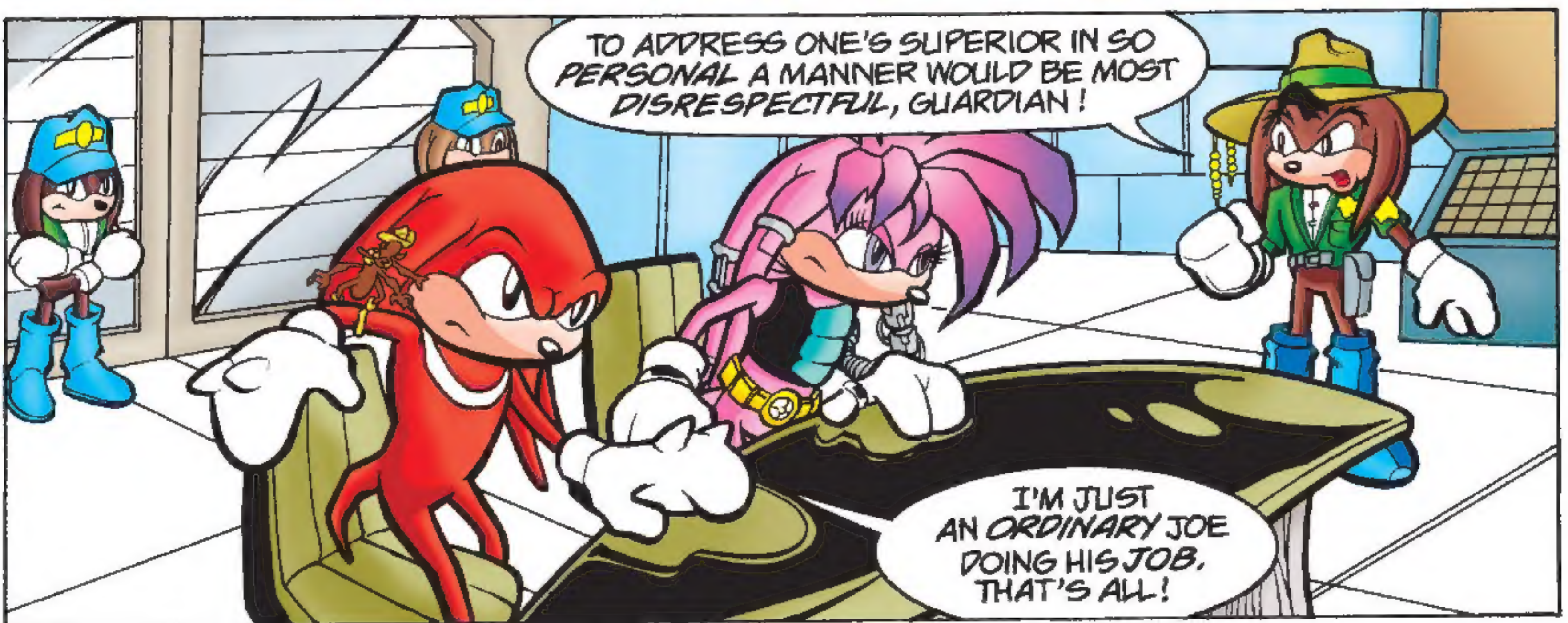
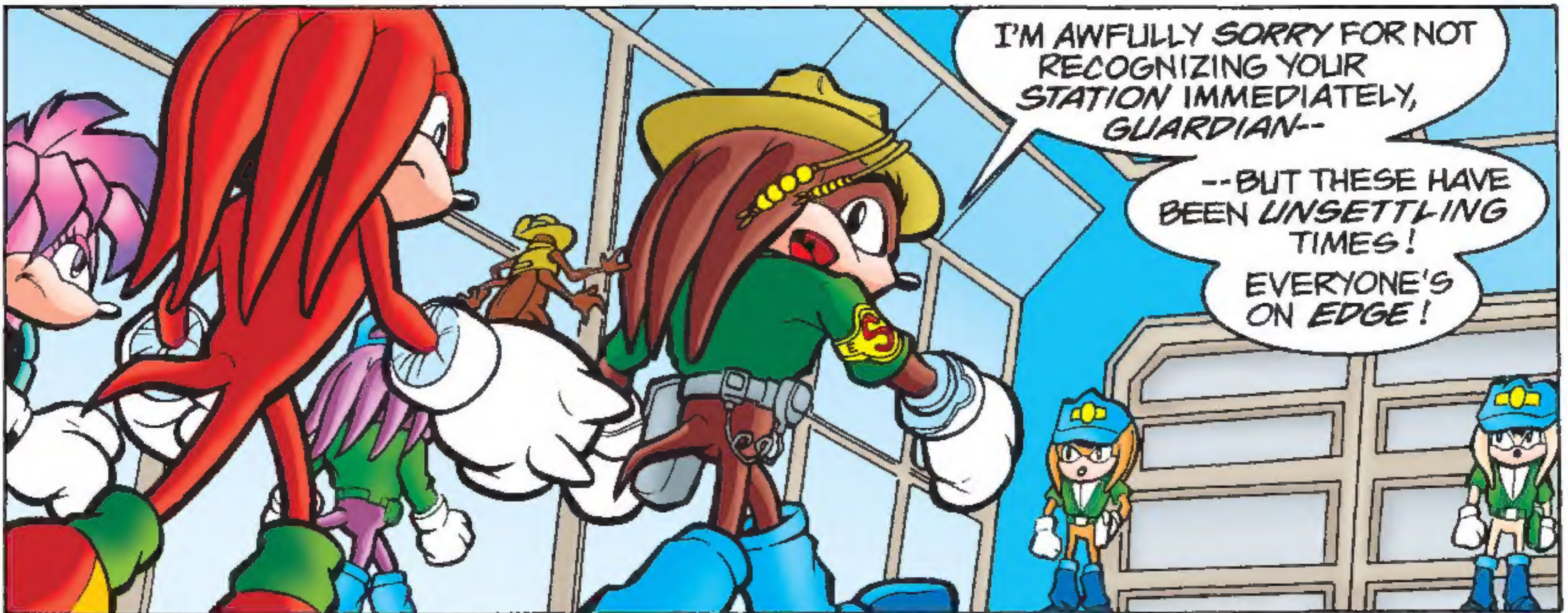
I'M SURE
THE CONSTABLE
WILL EXPLAIN IN
DUE TIME!

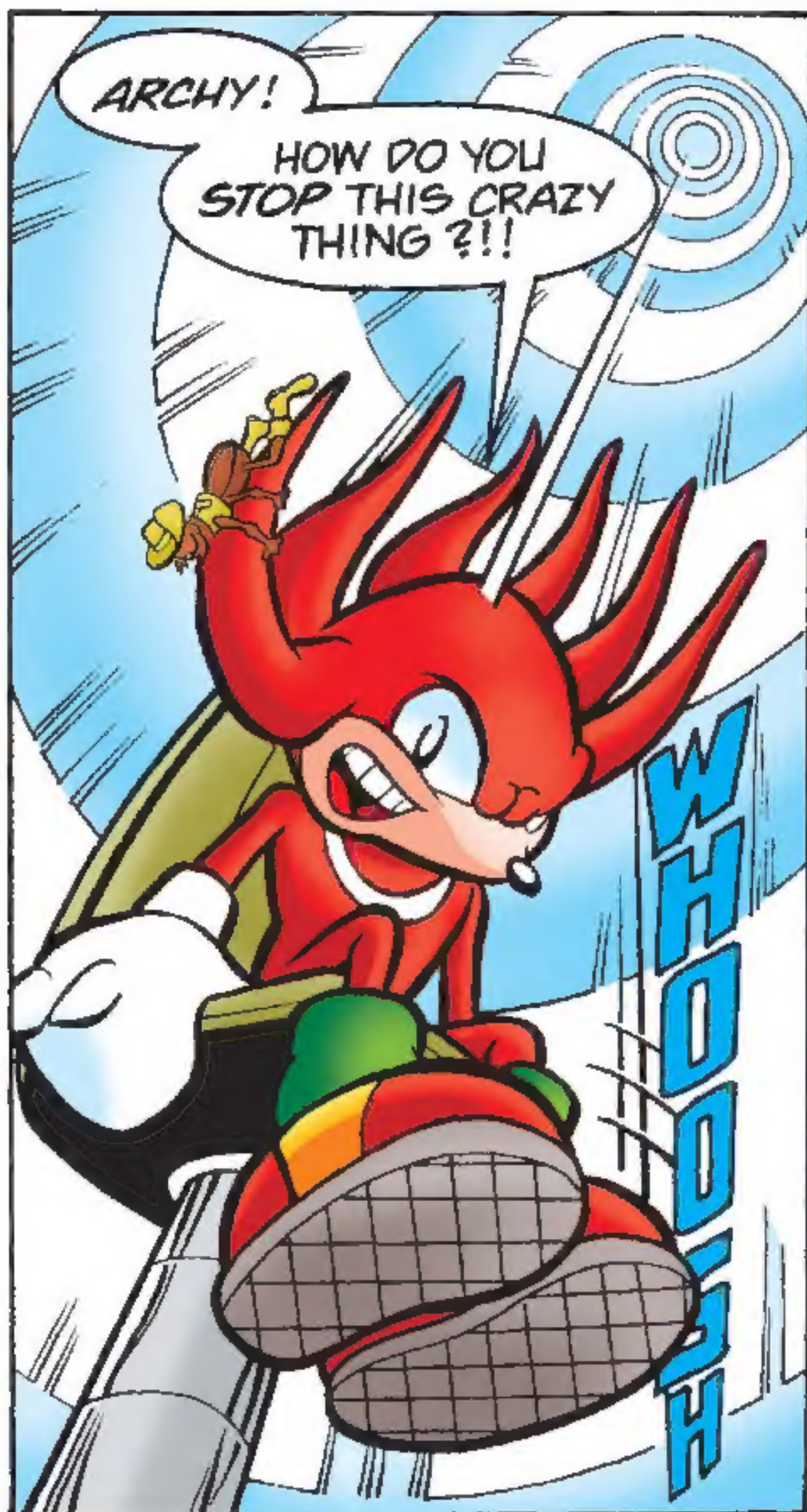
AFTER ALL--

HE
SEEMS LIKE
A REASONABLE
CHAP!

MAYBE SO,
BUT NOBODY HAS
REALLY SAID MUCH
SINCE THEY DECIDED
TO BRING US IN!

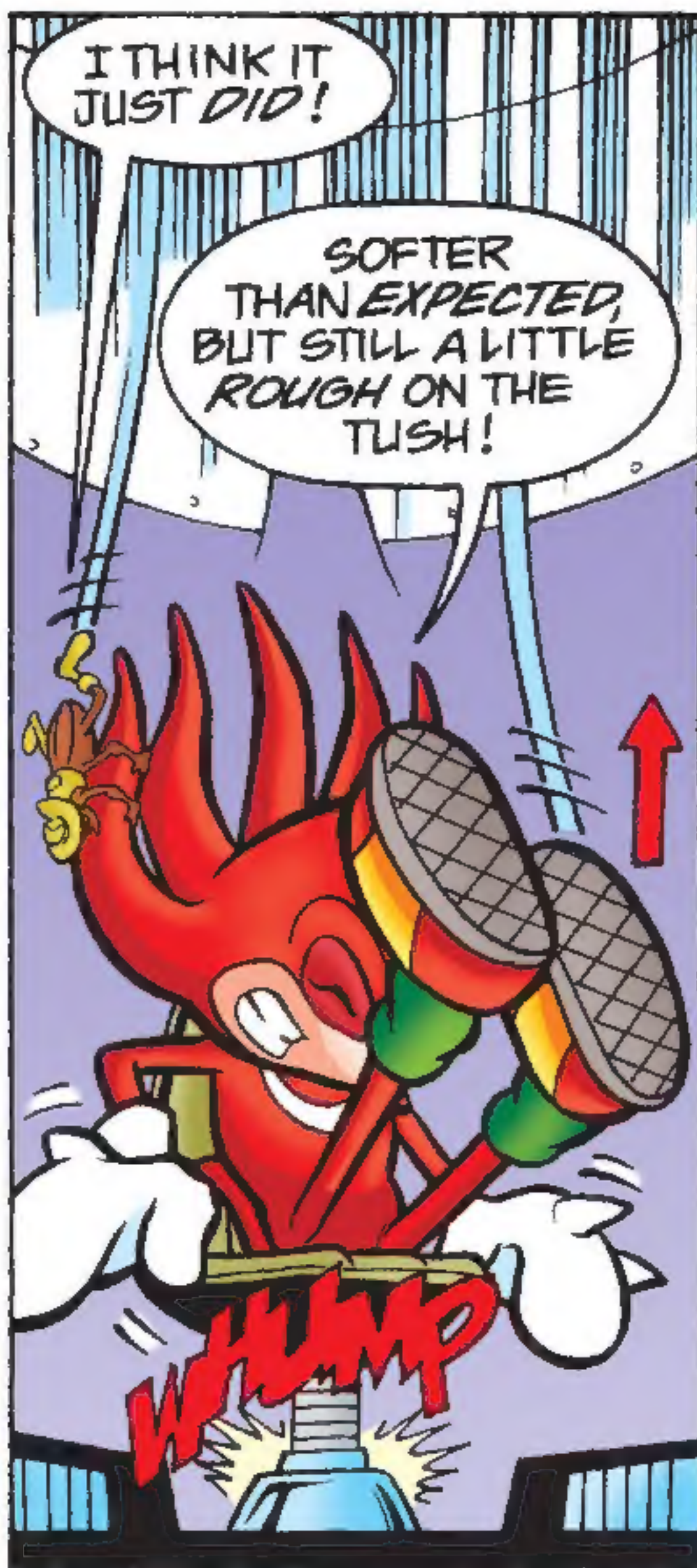
PAUL OUT





ARCHY!

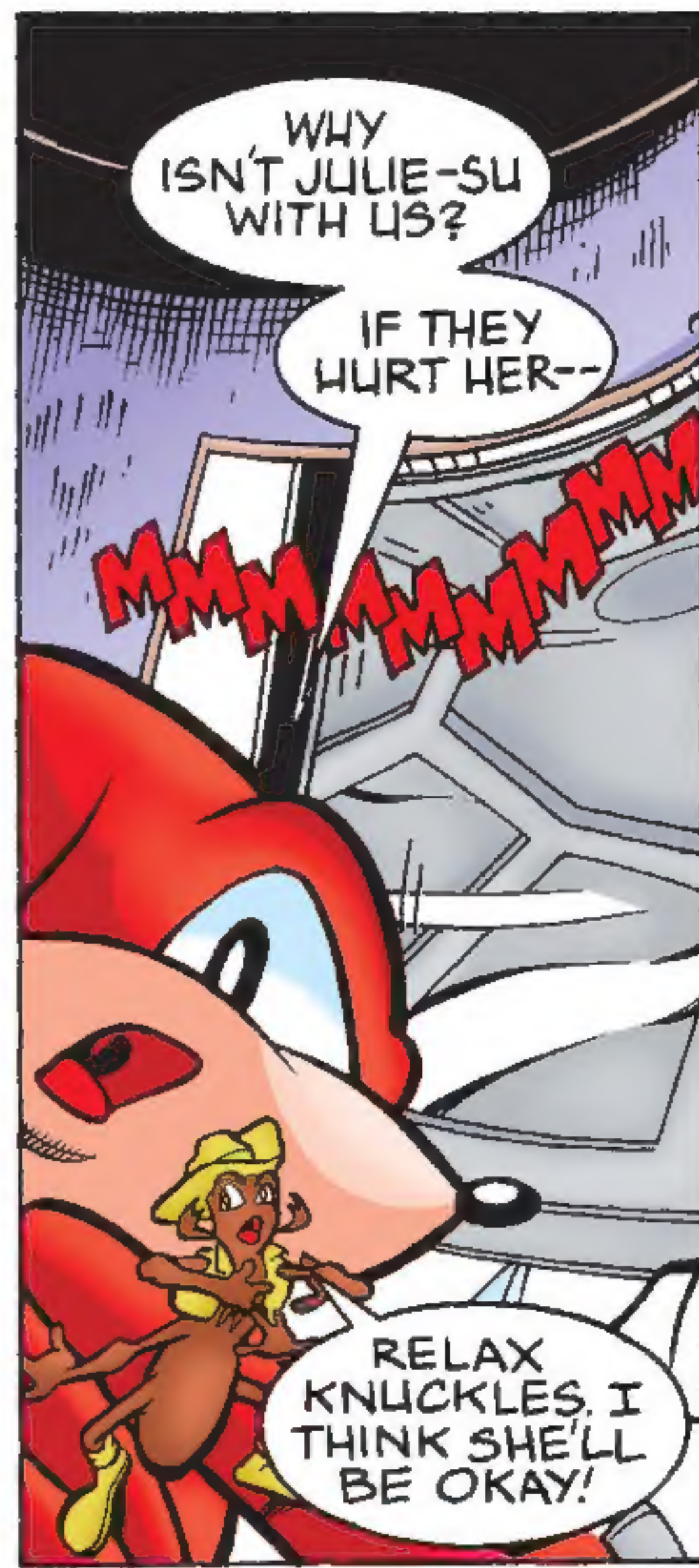
HOW DO YOU
STOP THIS CRAZY
THING ?!!



I THINK IT
JUST DID!

SOFTER
THAN EXPECTED,
BUT STILL A LITTLE
ROUGH ON THE
TUSH!

WHUMP

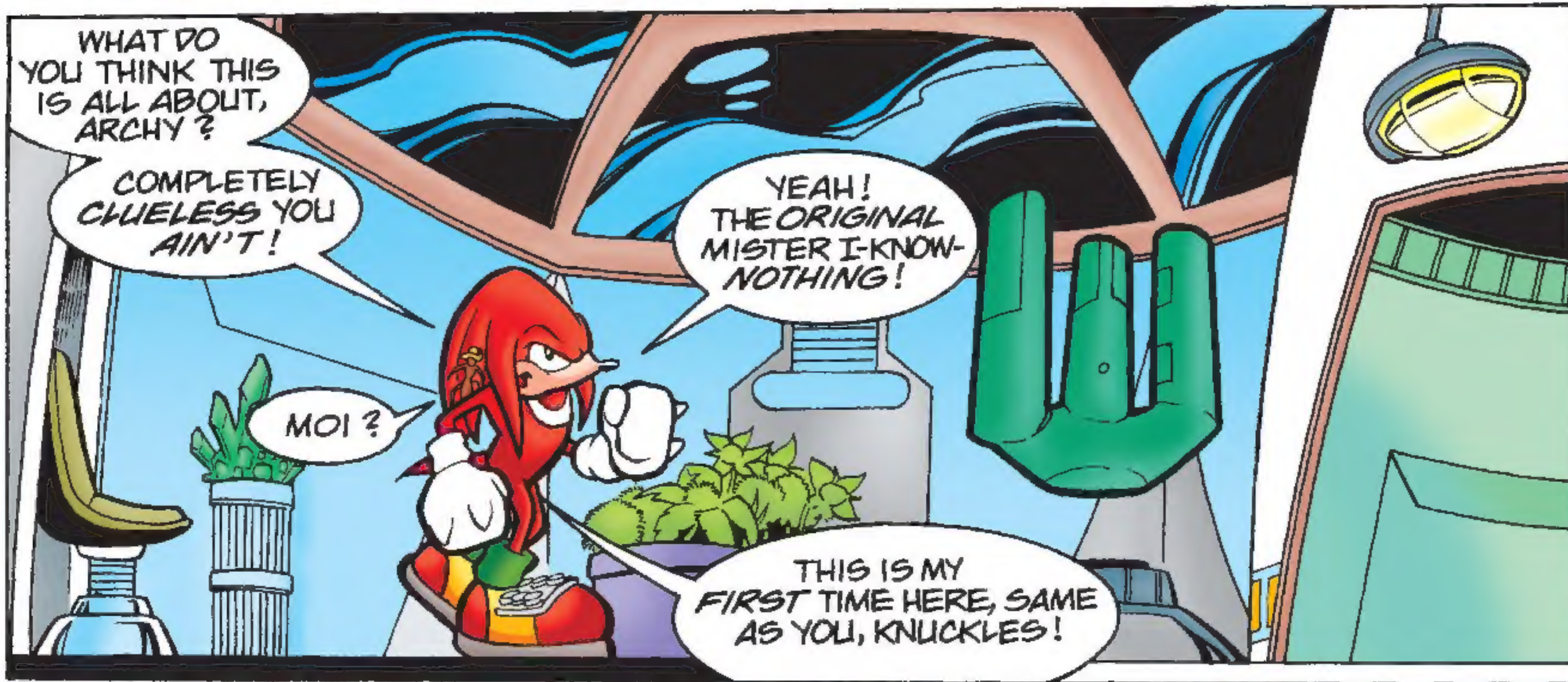


WHY
ISN'T JULIE-SU
WITH US?

IF THEY
HURT HER--

MMM...MMM...MMM

RELAX
KNUCKLES. I
THINK SHE'LL
BE OKAY!



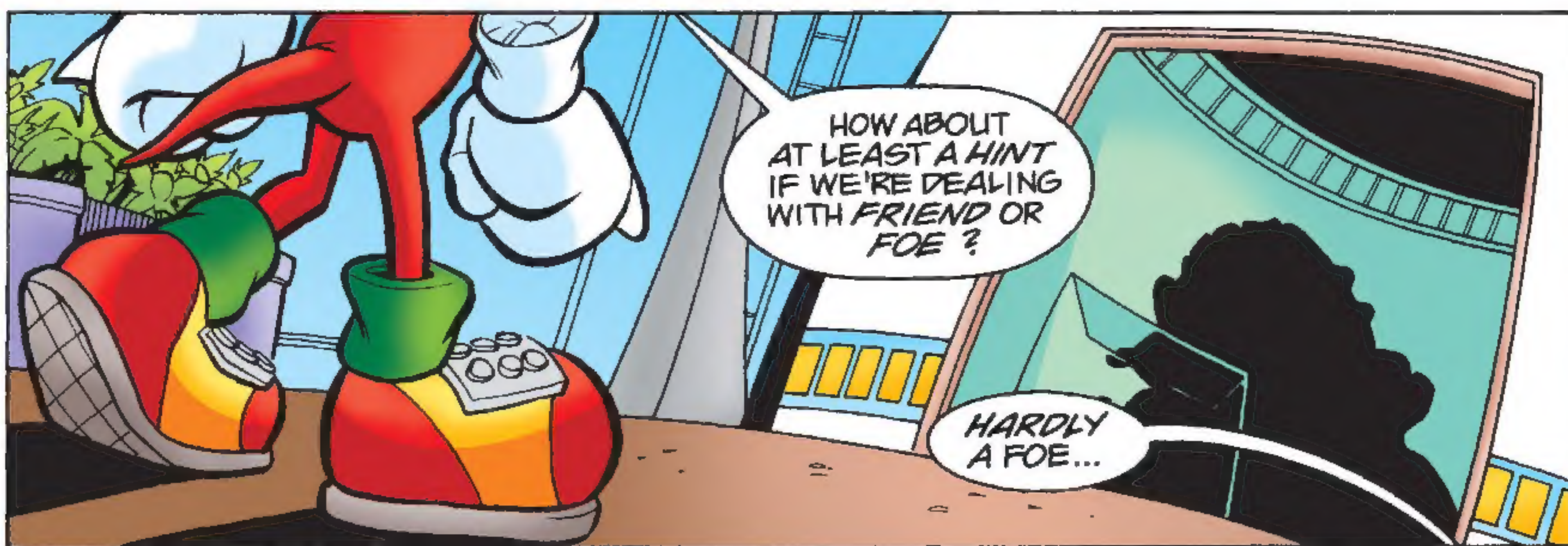
WHAT DO
YOU THINK THIS
IS ALL ABOUT,
ARCHY?

COMPLETELY
CLUELESS YOU
AIN'T!

MOI ?

YEAH!
THE ORIGINAL
MISTER I-KNOW-
NOTHING!

THIS IS MY
FIRST TIME HERE, SAME
AS YOU, KNUCKLES!

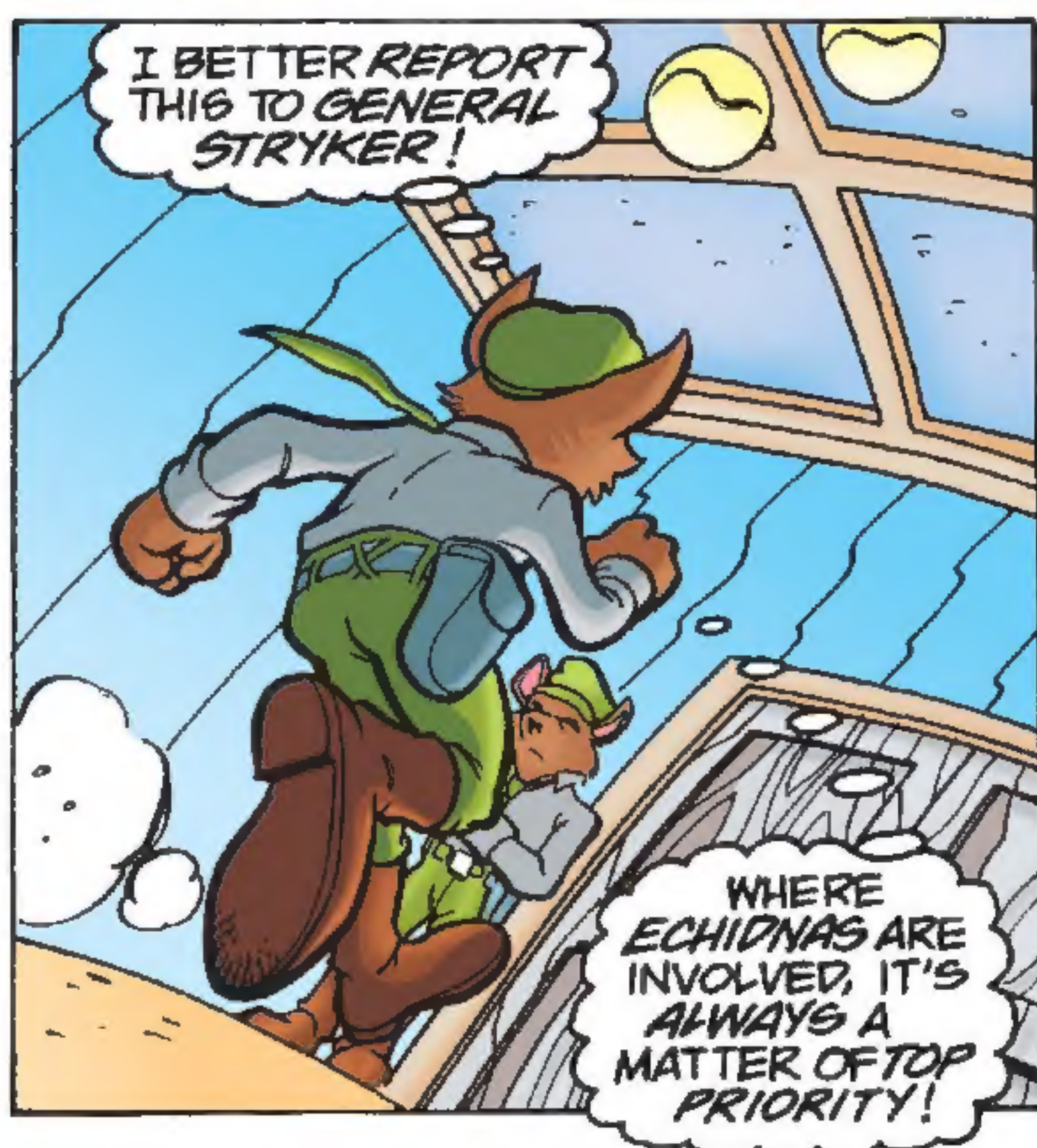


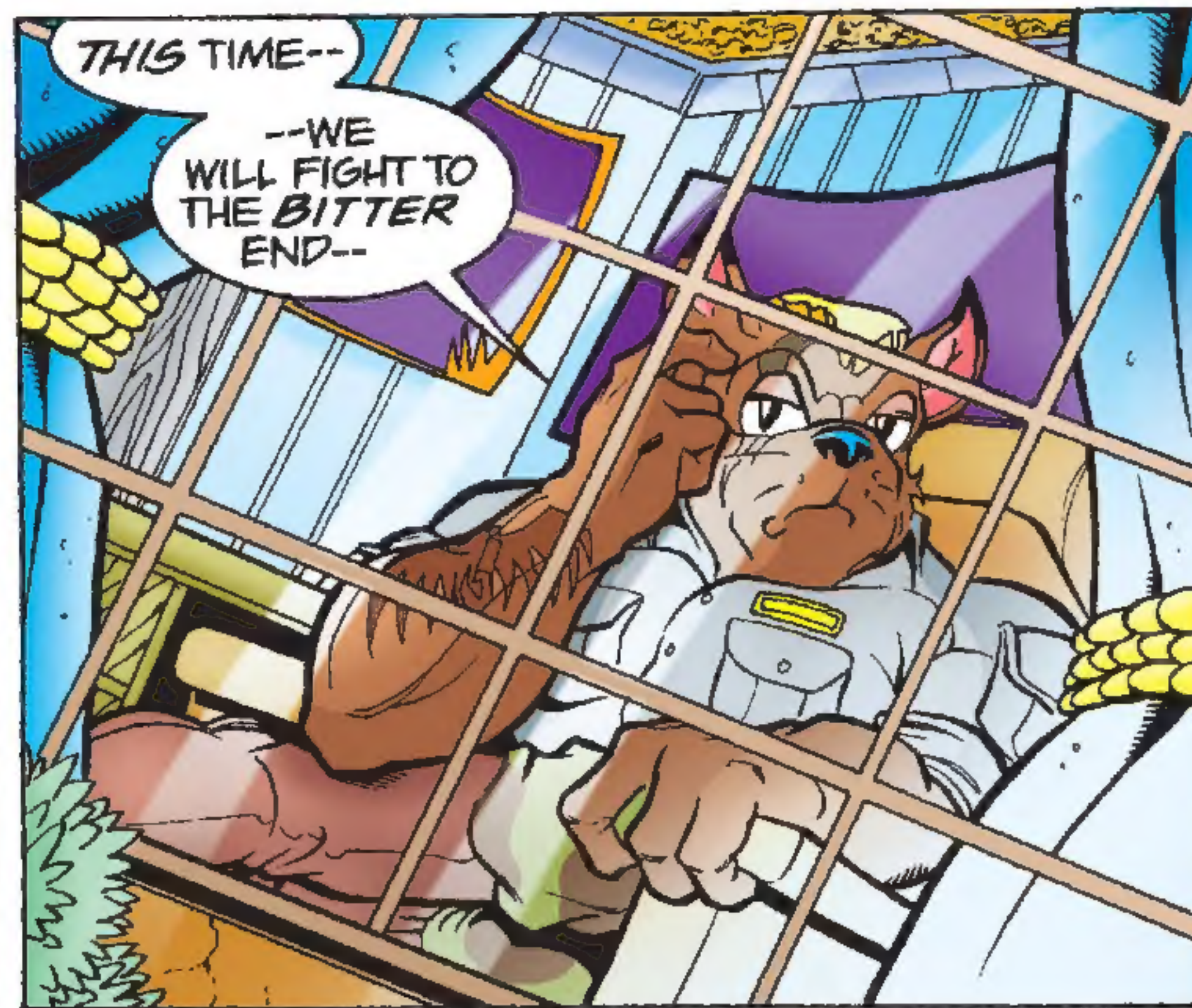
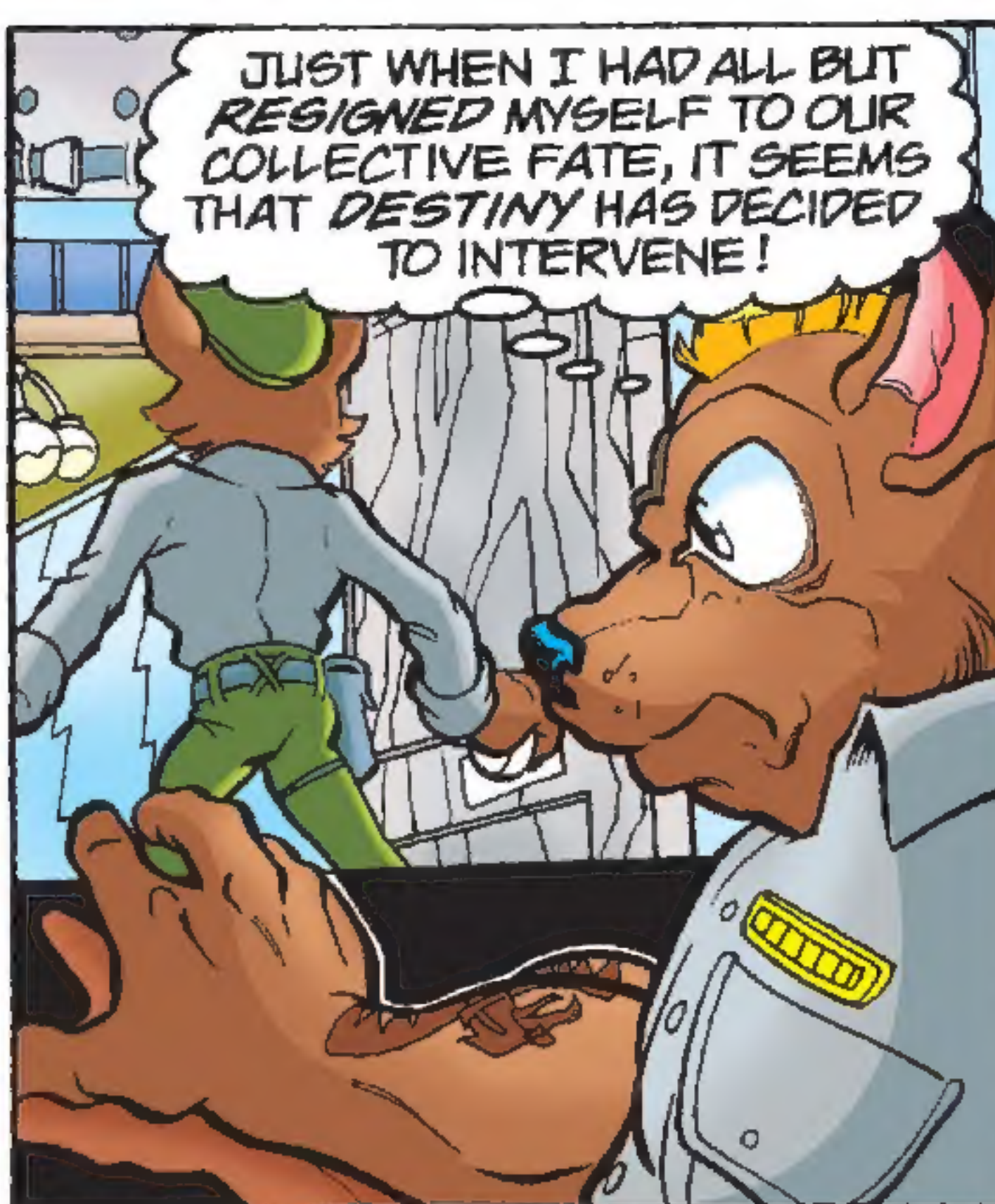
HOW ABOUT
AT LEAST A HINT
IF WE'RE DEALING
WITH FRIEND OR
FOE ?

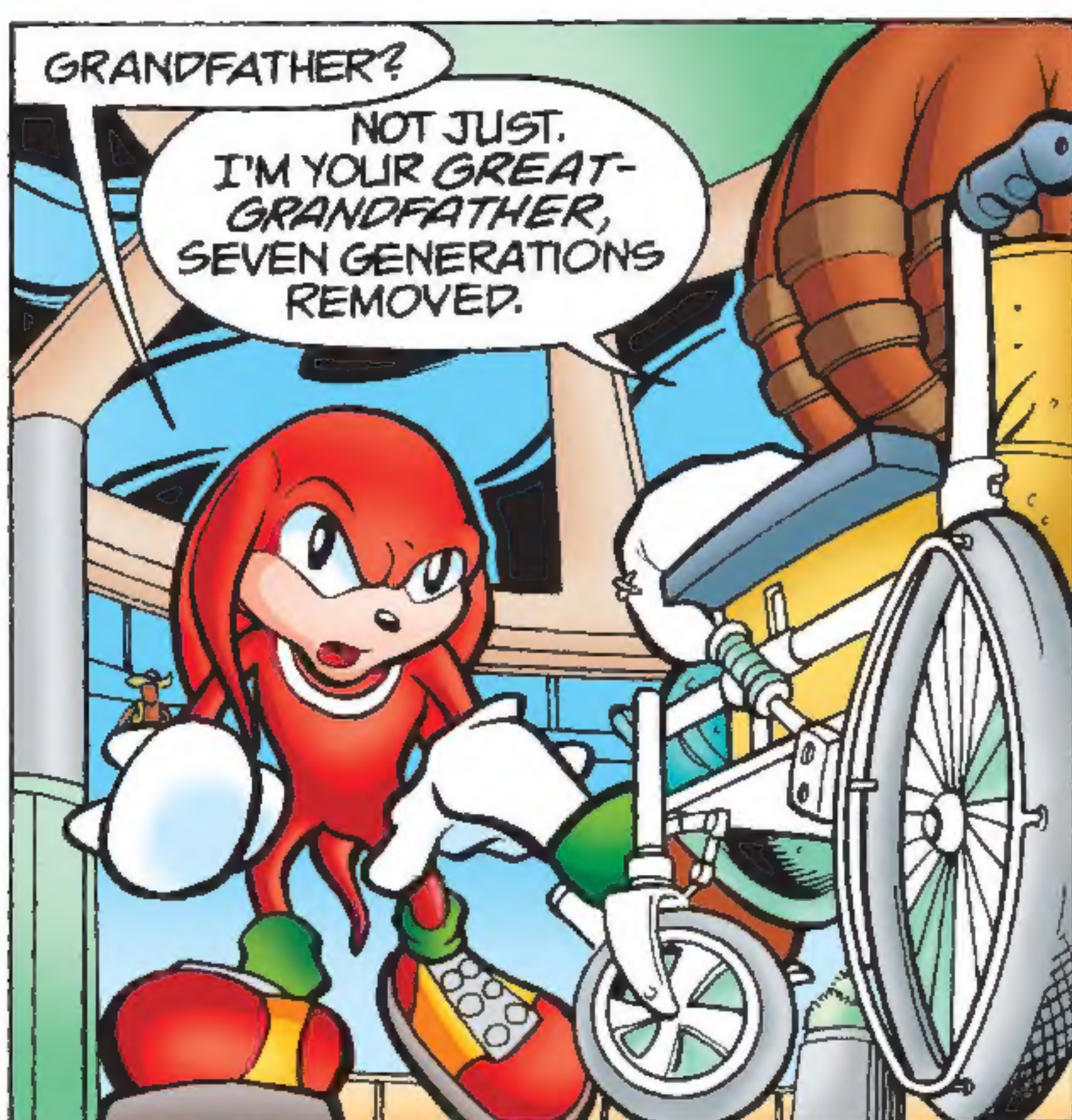
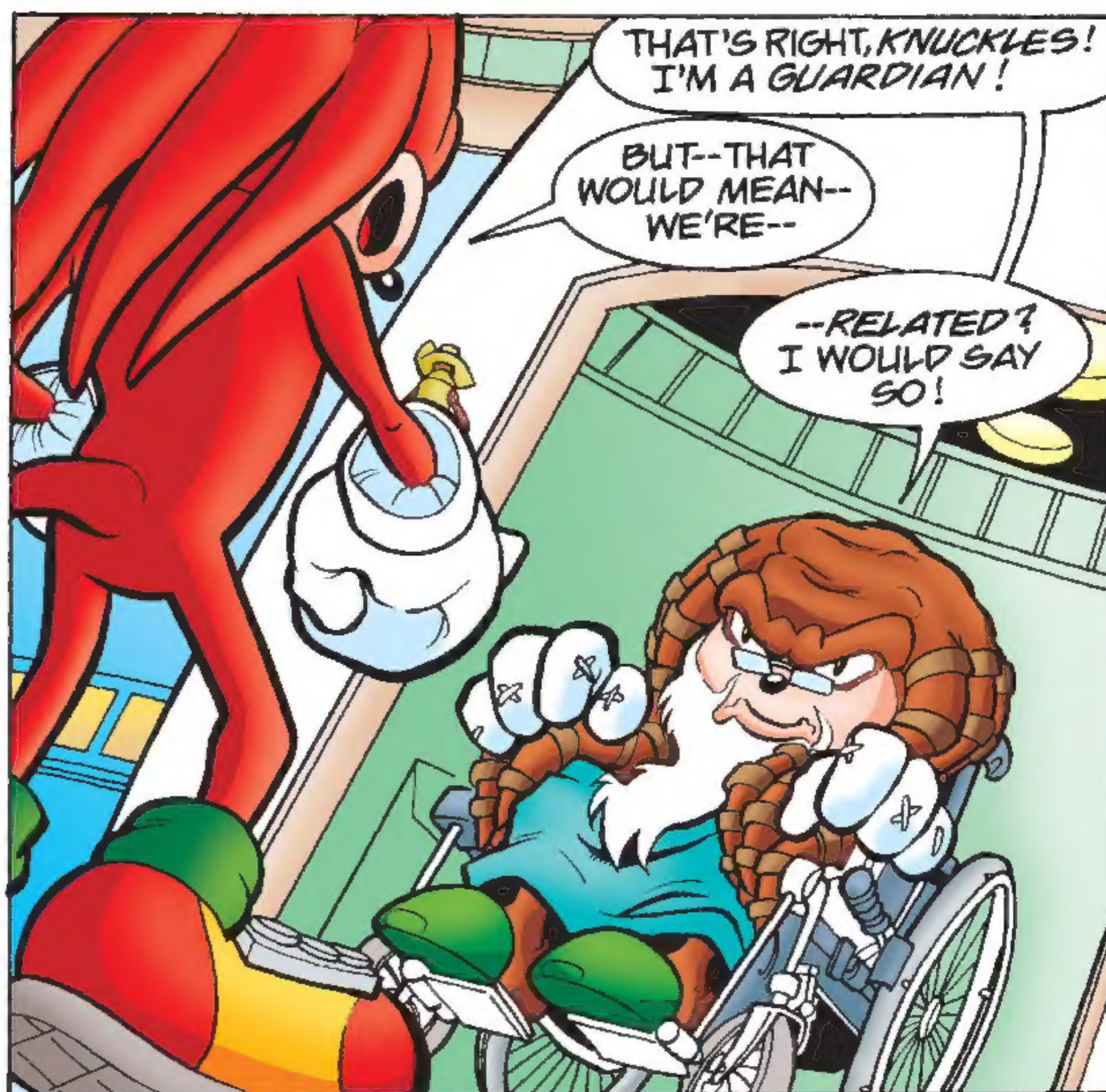
HARDLY
A FOE...

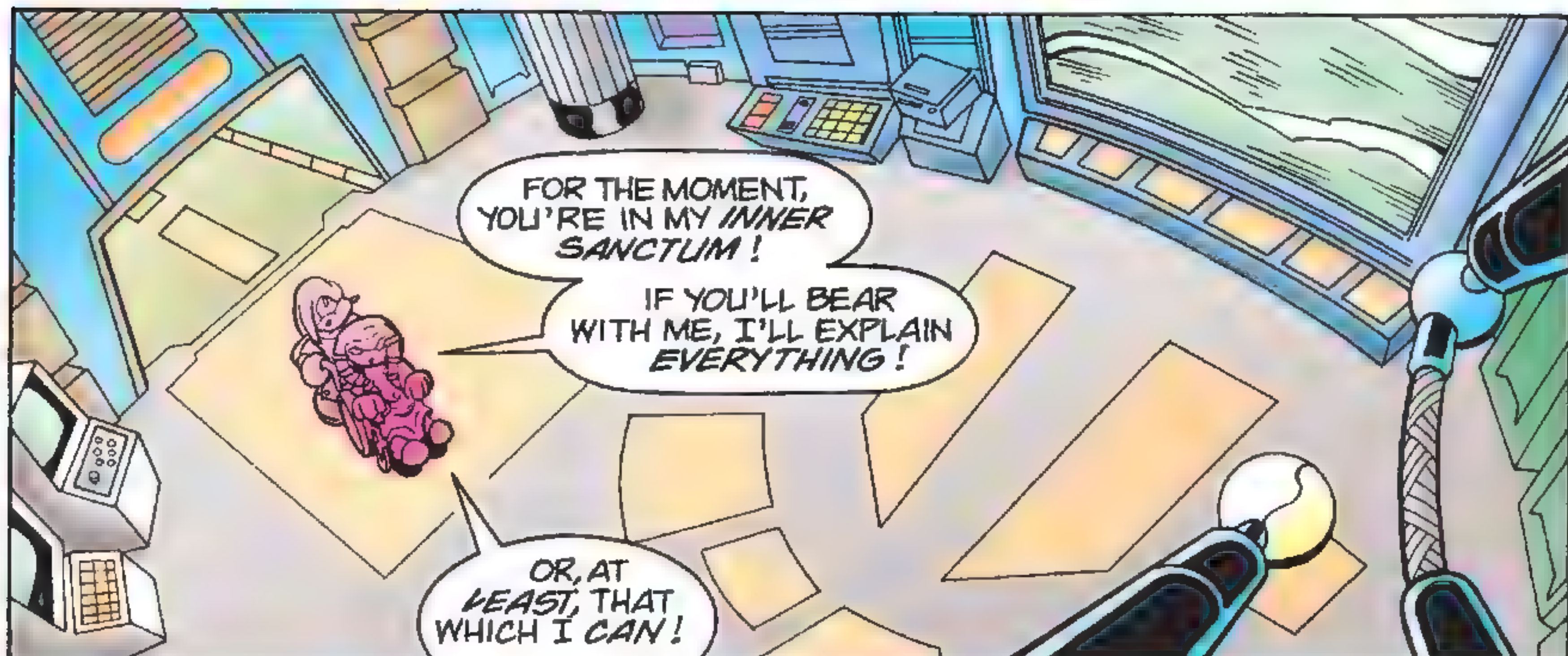
"... AND DEFINITELY
MORE
THAN A FRIEND!"

KHA-KHOOOM!!





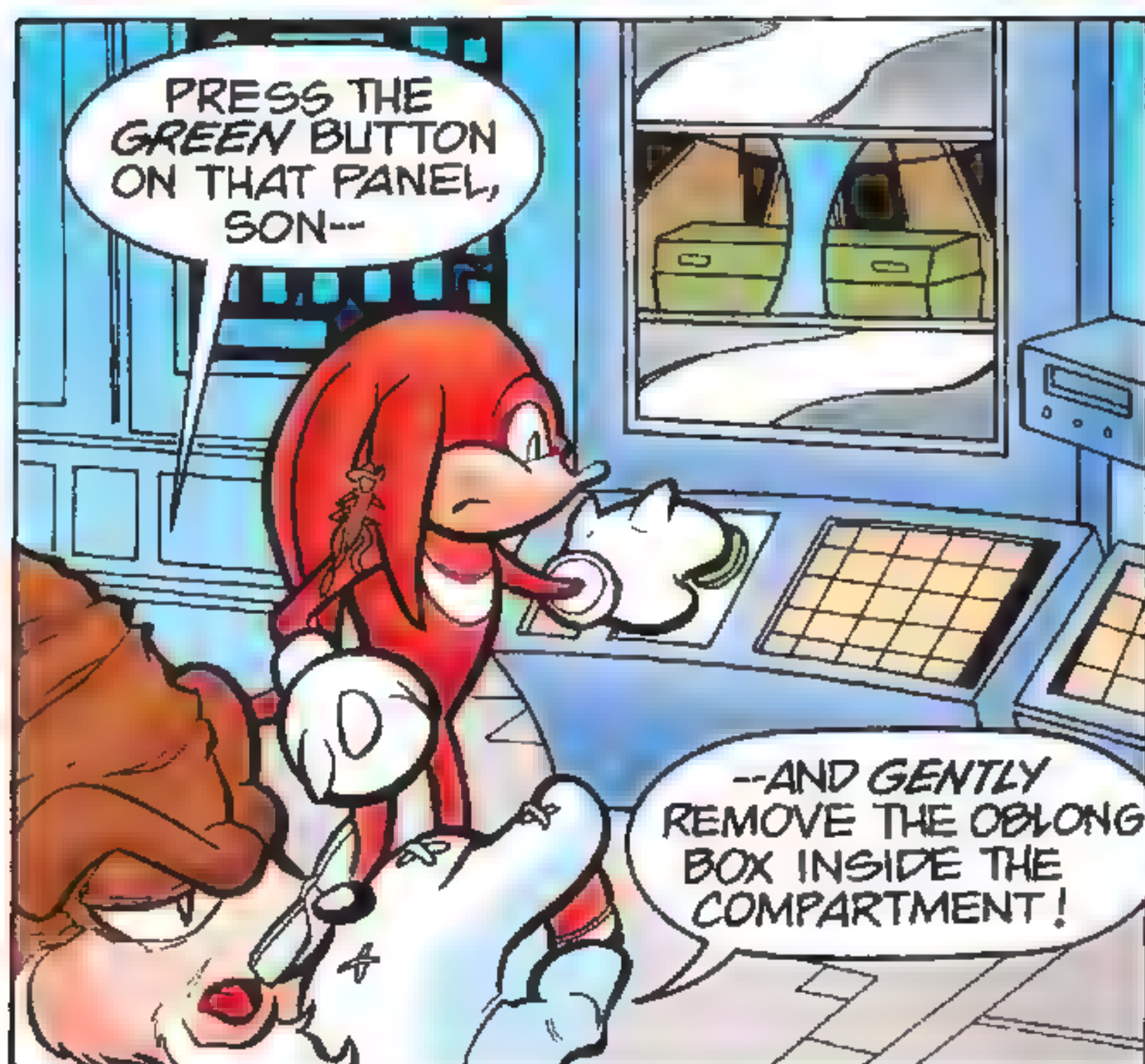




FOR THE MOMENT,
YOU'RE IN MY *INNER*
SANCTUM!

IF YOU'LL BEAR
WITH ME, I'LL EXPLAIN
EVERYTHING!

OR, AT
LEAST, THAT
WHICH I CAN!



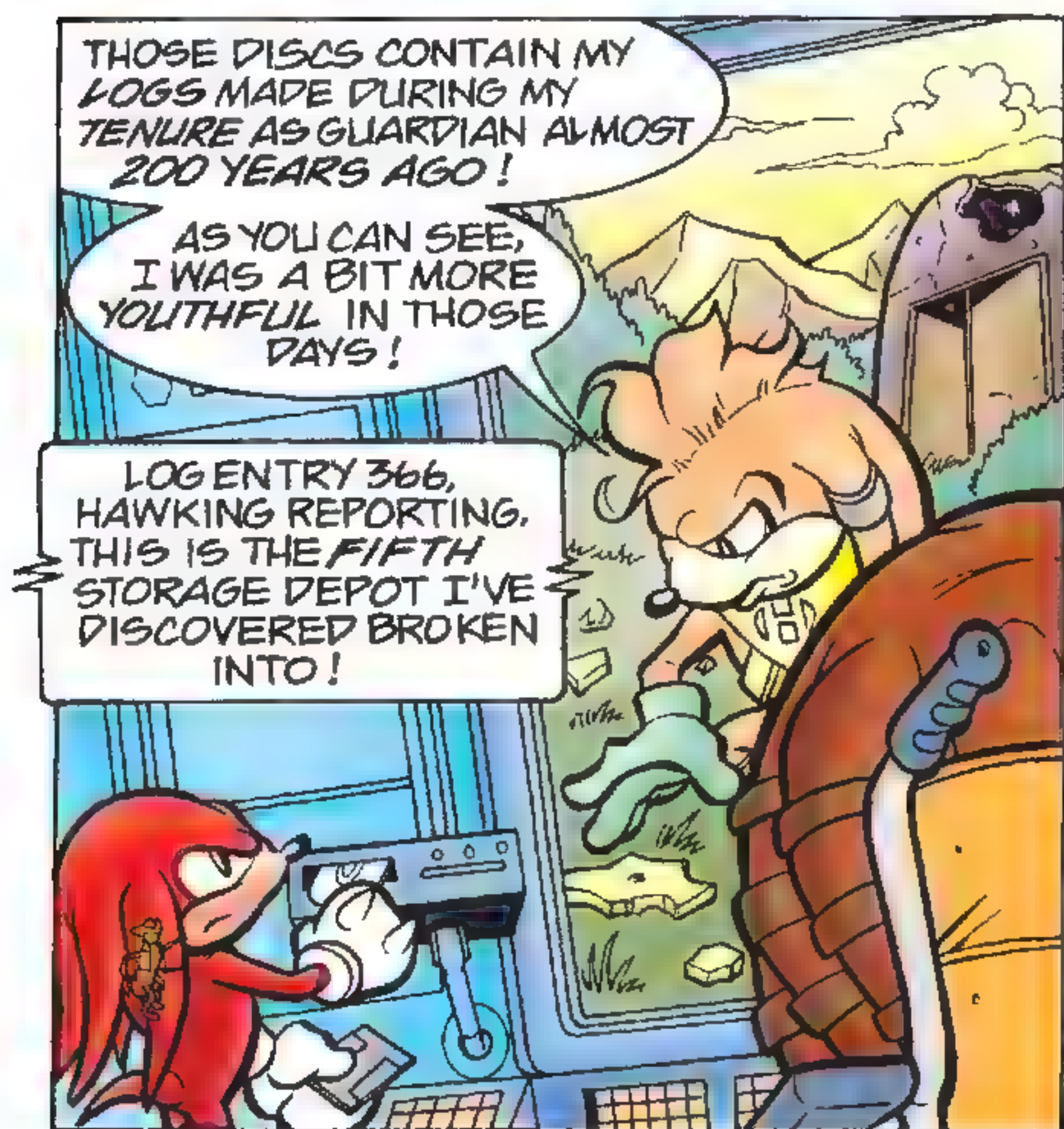
PRESS THE
GREEN BUTTON
ON THAT PANEL,
SON--

--AND GENTLY
REMOVE THE OBLONG
BOX INSIDE THE
COMPARTMENT!



A SET
OF DISCS!
NOW WHAT?

REMOVE THE *FIRST*
ONE AND SLIDE IT INTO
THE SLOT ON THAT CONSOLE
NEXT TO YOU!



THOSE DISCS CONTAIN MY
LOGS MADE DURING MY
TENURE AS GUARDIAN ALMOST
200 YEARS AGO!

AS YOU CAN SEE,
I WAS A BIT MORE
YOUTHFUL IN THOSE
DAYS!

LOG ENTRY 366,
HAWKING REPORTING.
THIS IS THE *FIFTH*
STORAGE DEPOT I'VE
DISCOVERED BROKEN
INTO!

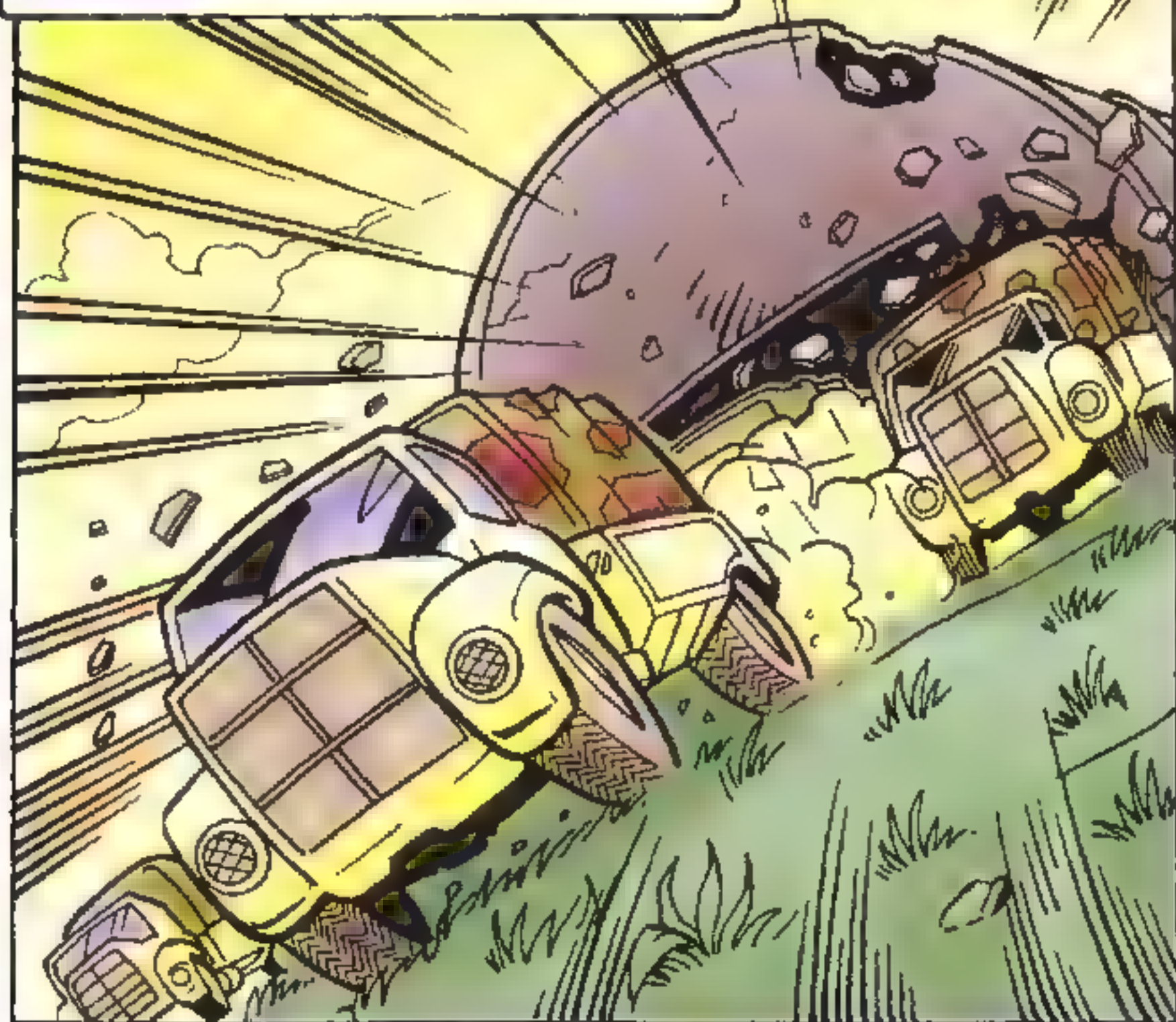


FOR ONCE, HOWEVER, IT
APPEARS THE LOOTERS
HAVEN'T MUCH OF A
HEAD START ON ME!

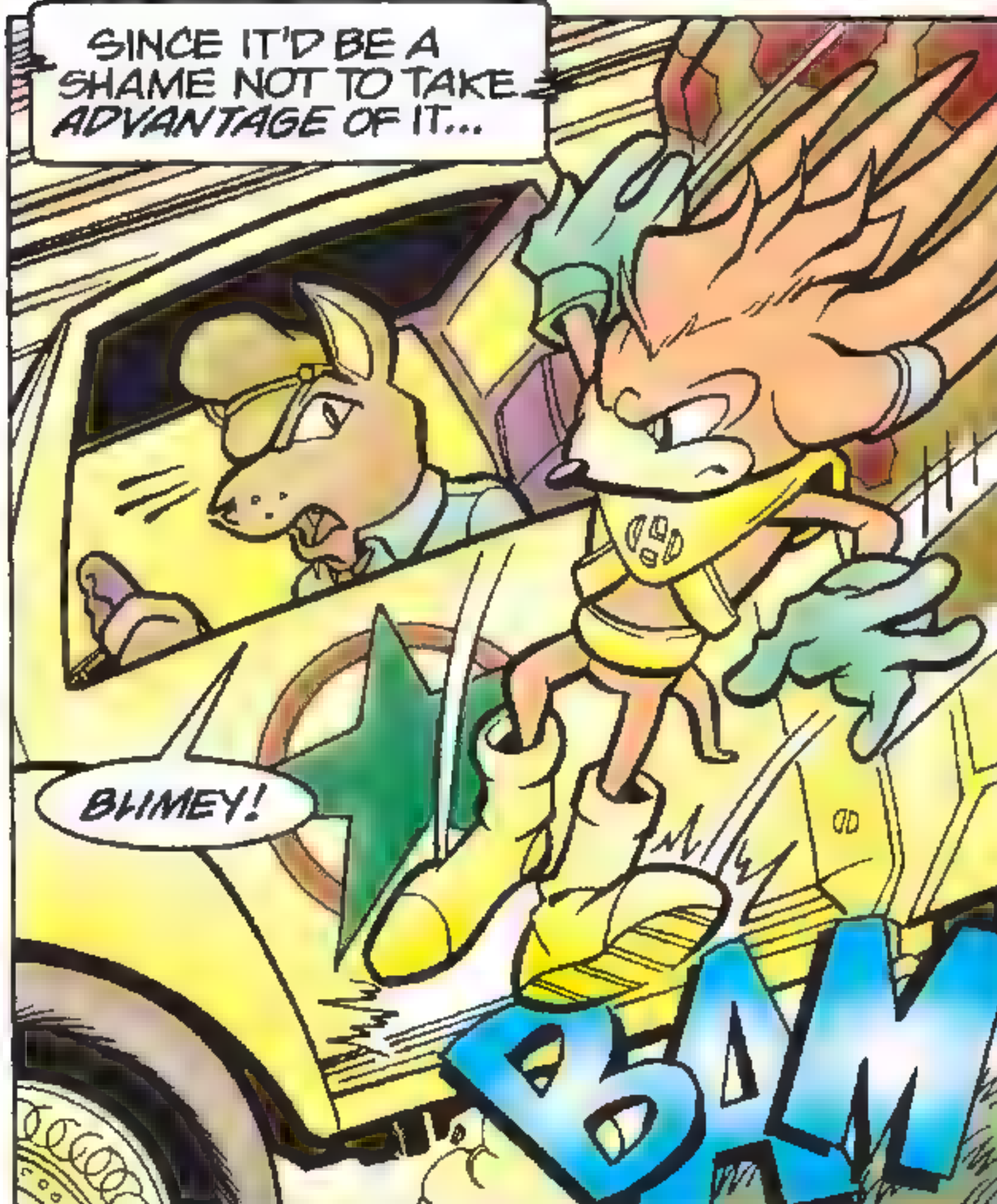
ROOAAAAARRR!

OH, HO!
THIS JUST MAY
BE MY LUCKY
DAY!

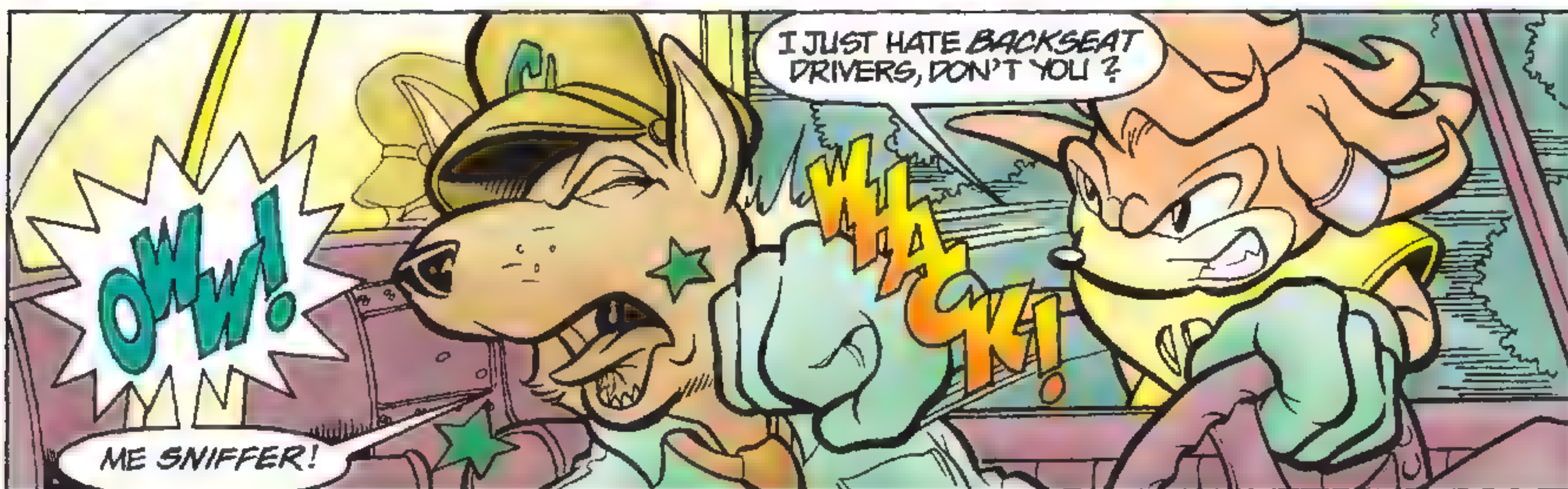
WITHIN MOMENTS OF TAKING
FLIGHT, I HAVE THE
LOOTERS IN VISUAL RANGE!
SINCE THERE IS NO ATTEMPT
AT EVASIVE ACTION,
I MUST ASSUME I HAVE THE
ELEMENT OF SURPRISE!



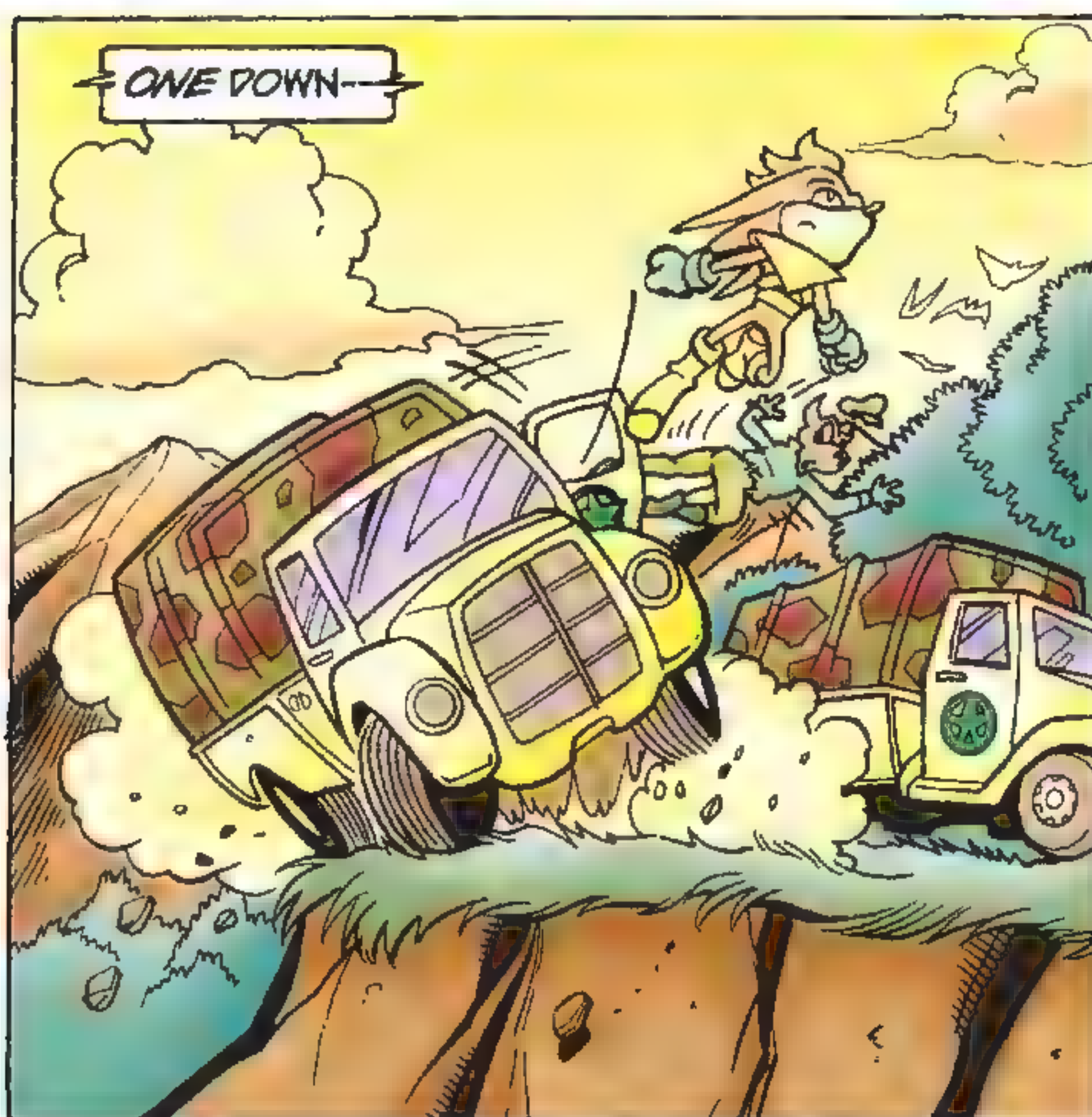
SINCE IT'D BE A
SHAME NOT TO TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF IT...



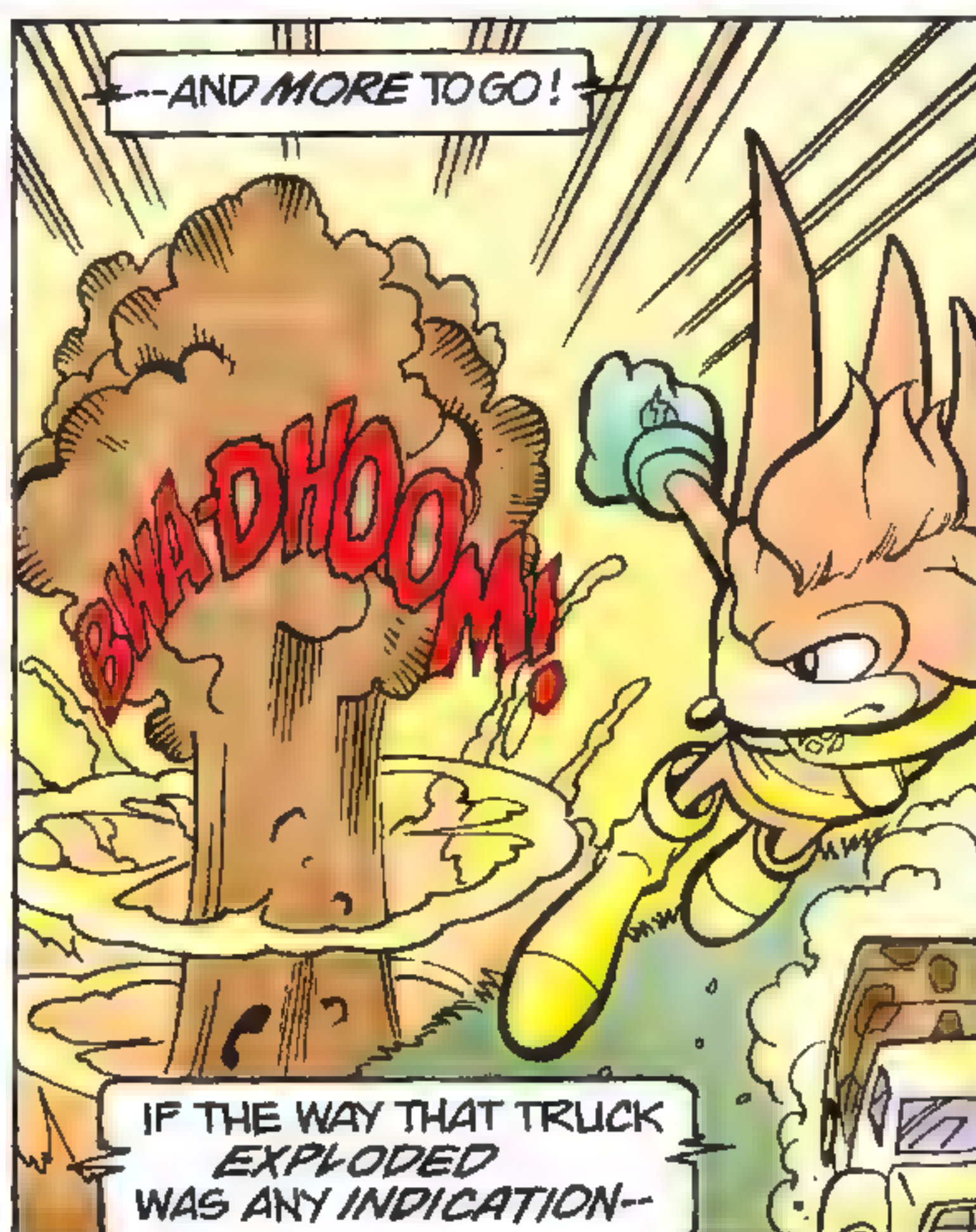
I JUST HATE BACKSEAT
DRIVERS, DON'T YOU?

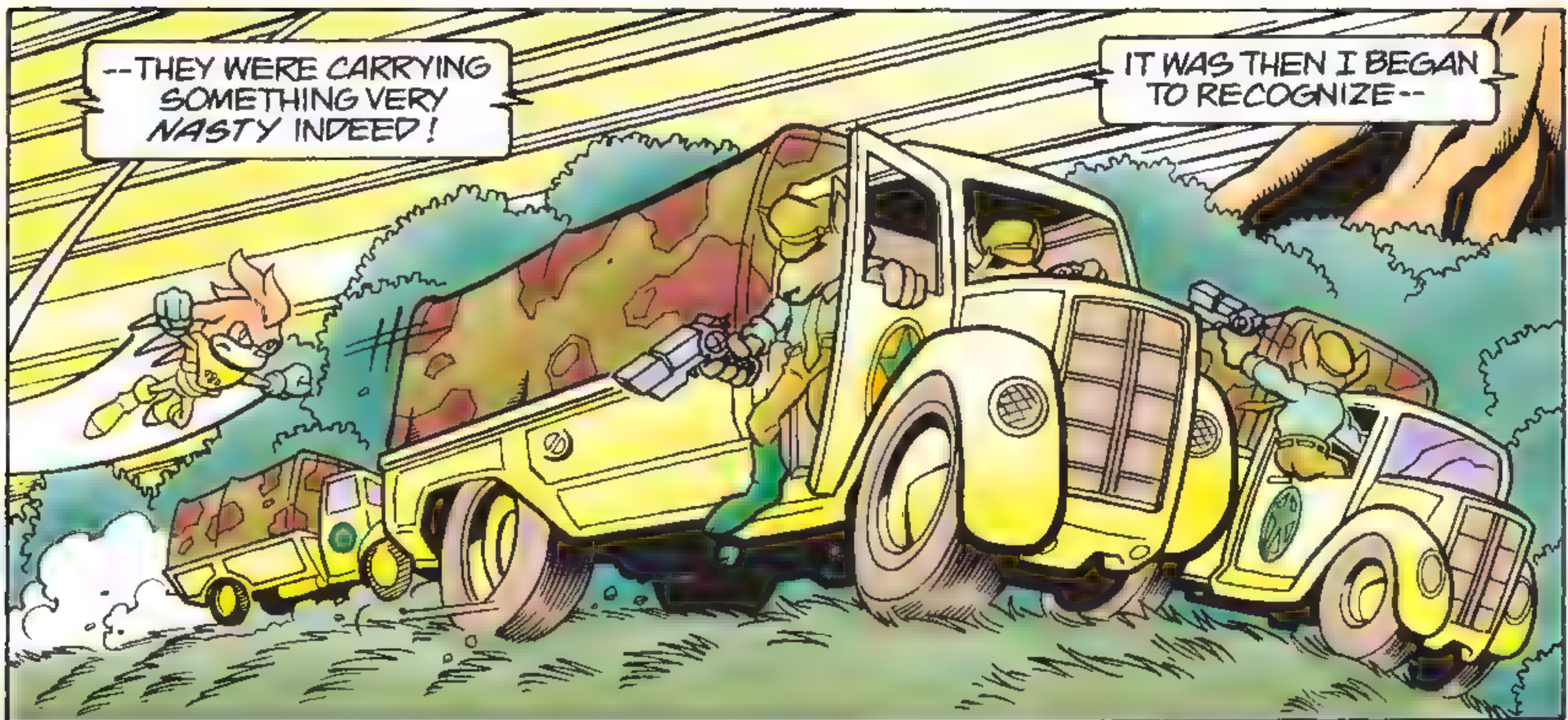


ONE DOWN--



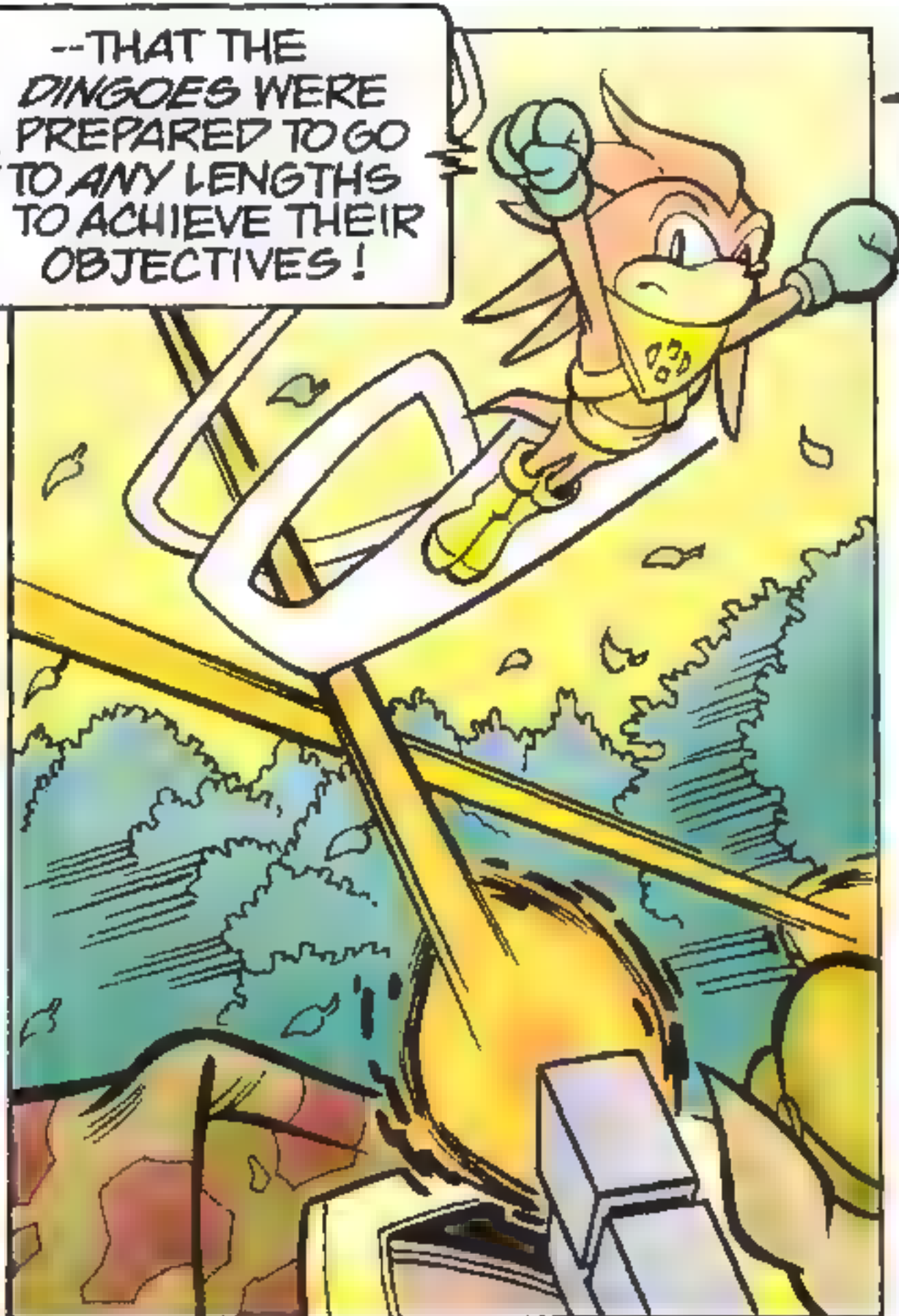
AND MORE TO GO!



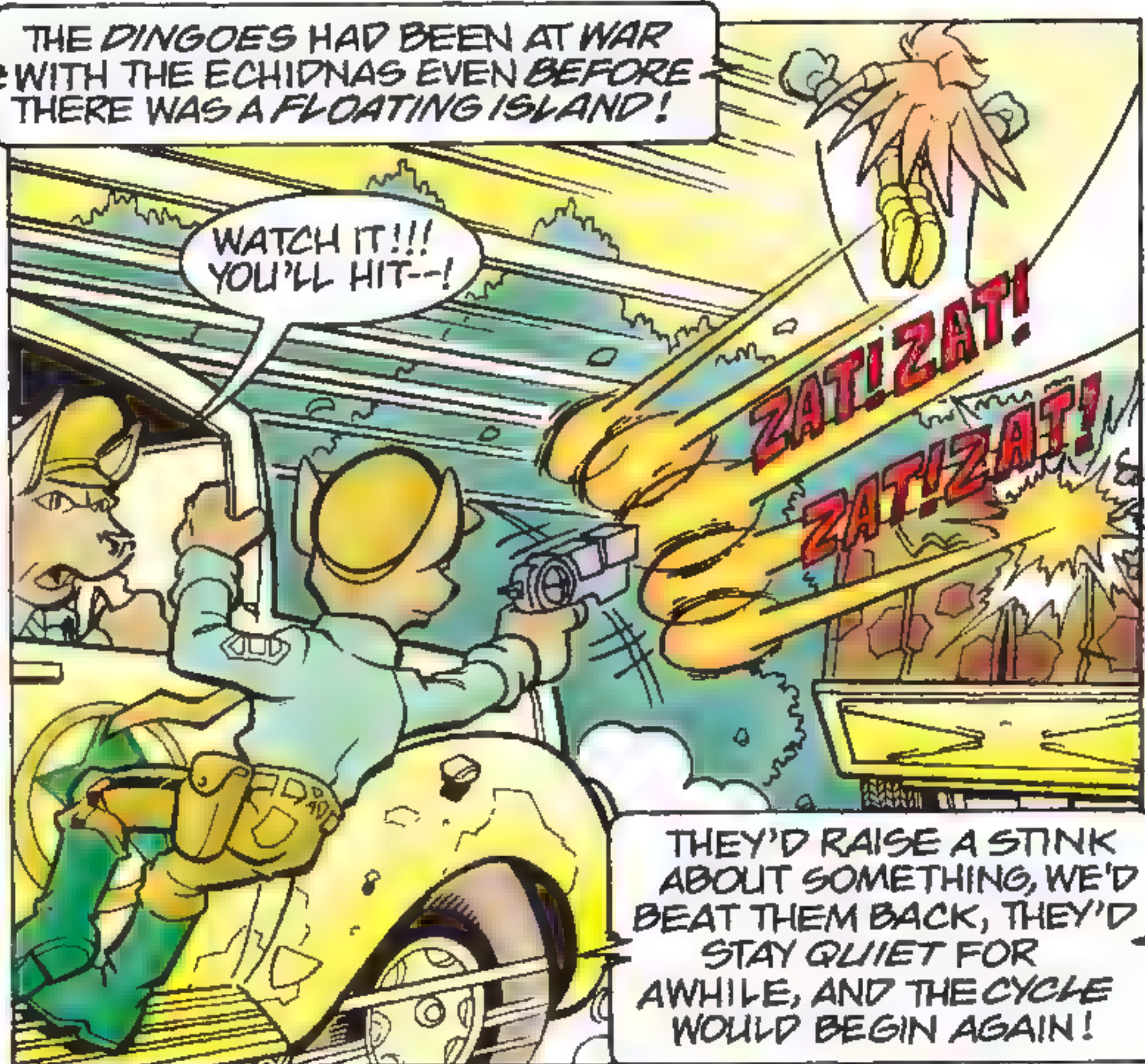


--THEY WERE CARRYING
SOMETHING VERY
NASTY INDEED!

IT WAS THEN I BEGAN
TO RECOGNIZE--



--THAT THE
DINGOES WERE
PREPARED TO GO
TO ANY LENGTHS
TO ACHIEVE THEIR
OBJECTIVES!

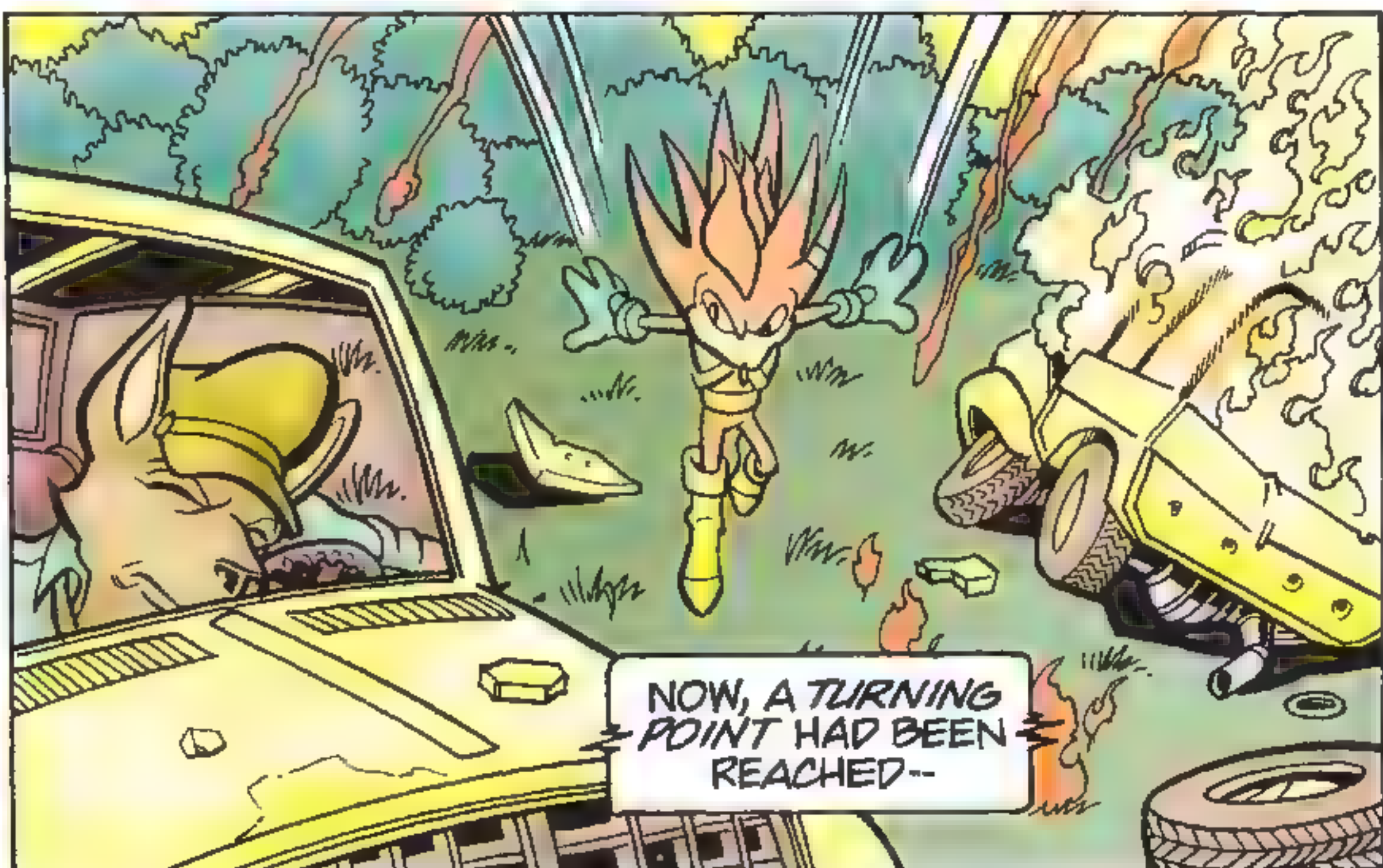


THE DINGOES HAD BEEN AT WAR
WITH THE ECHIDNAS EVEN BEFORE
THERE WAS A FLOATING ISLAND!

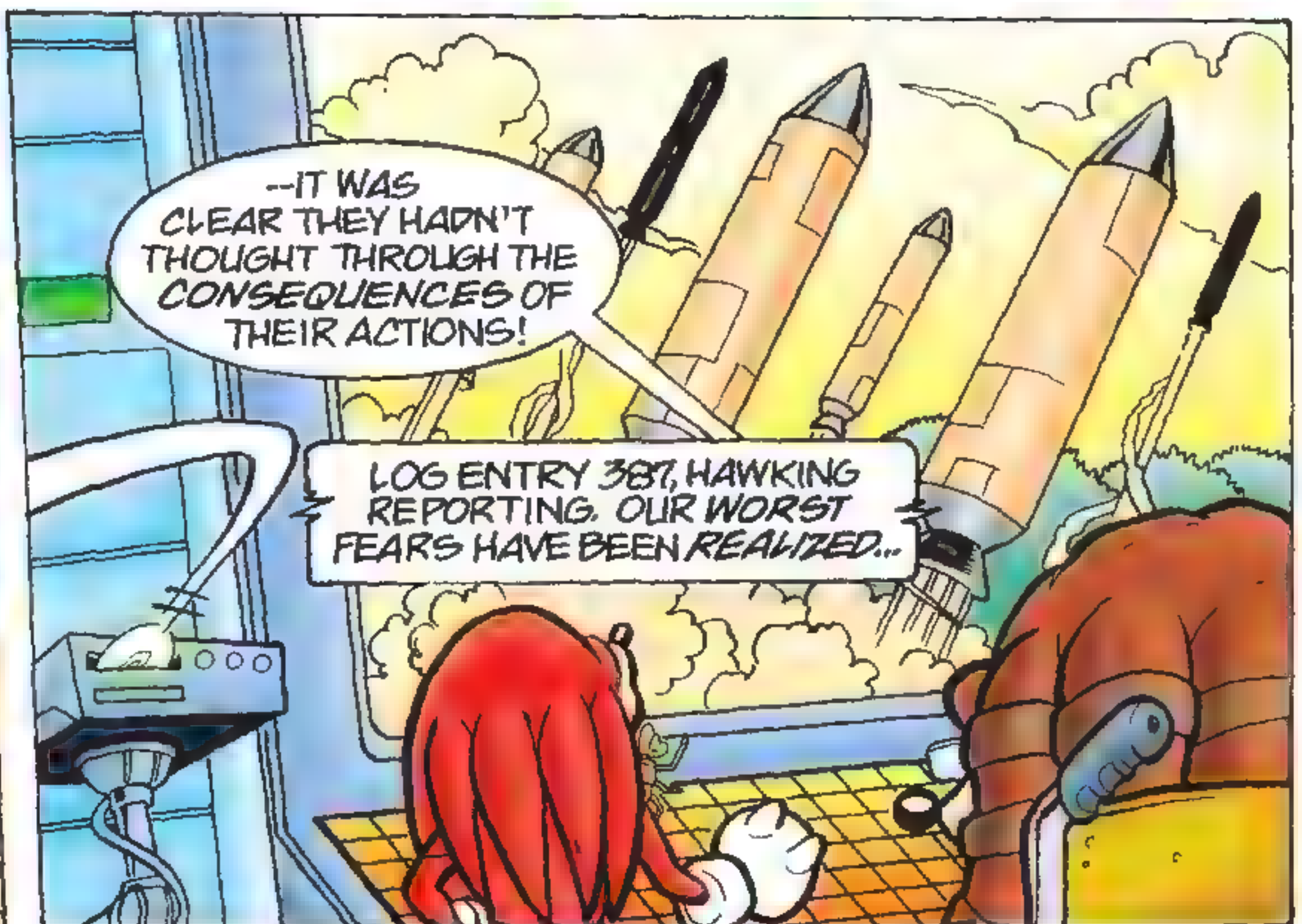
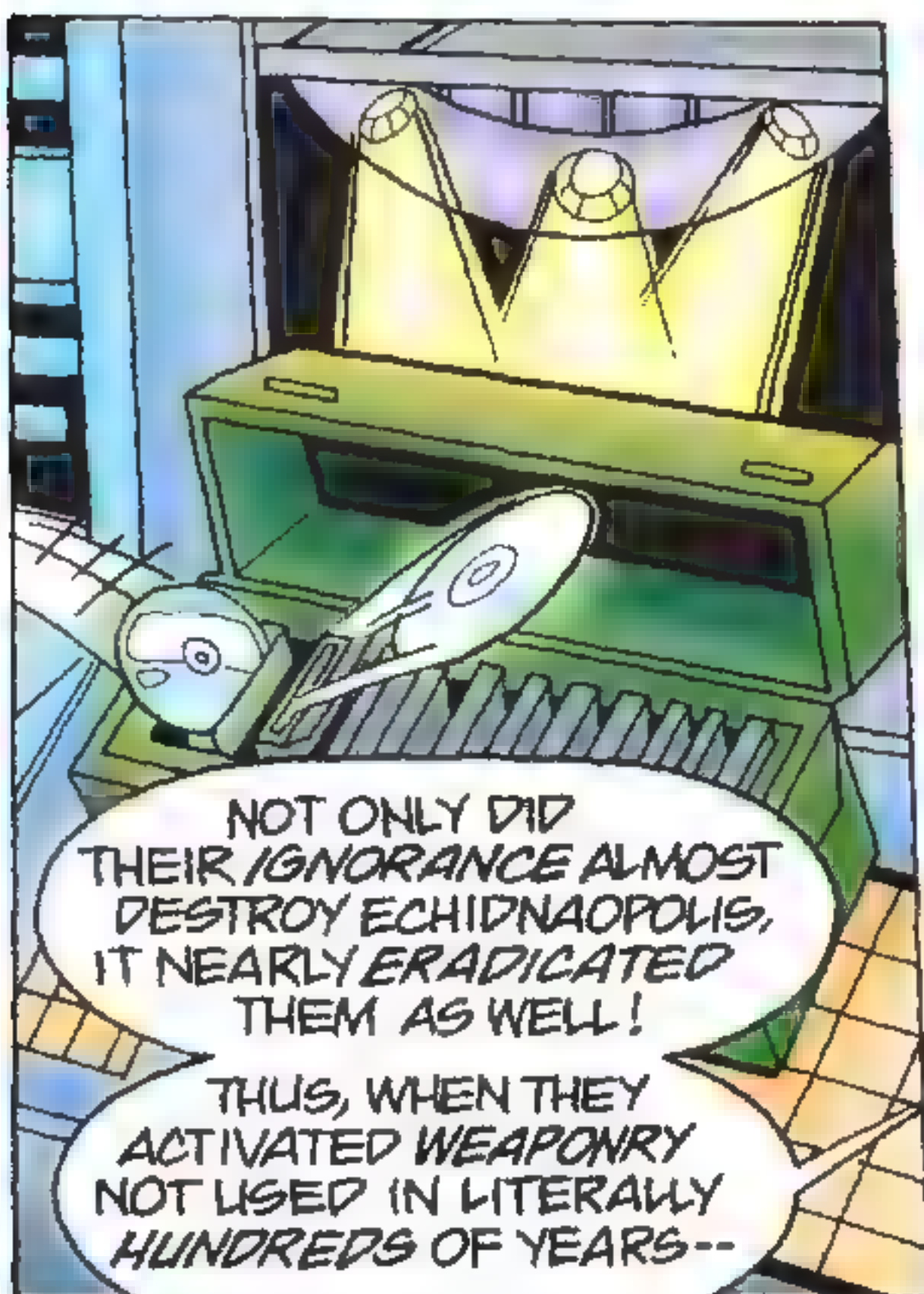
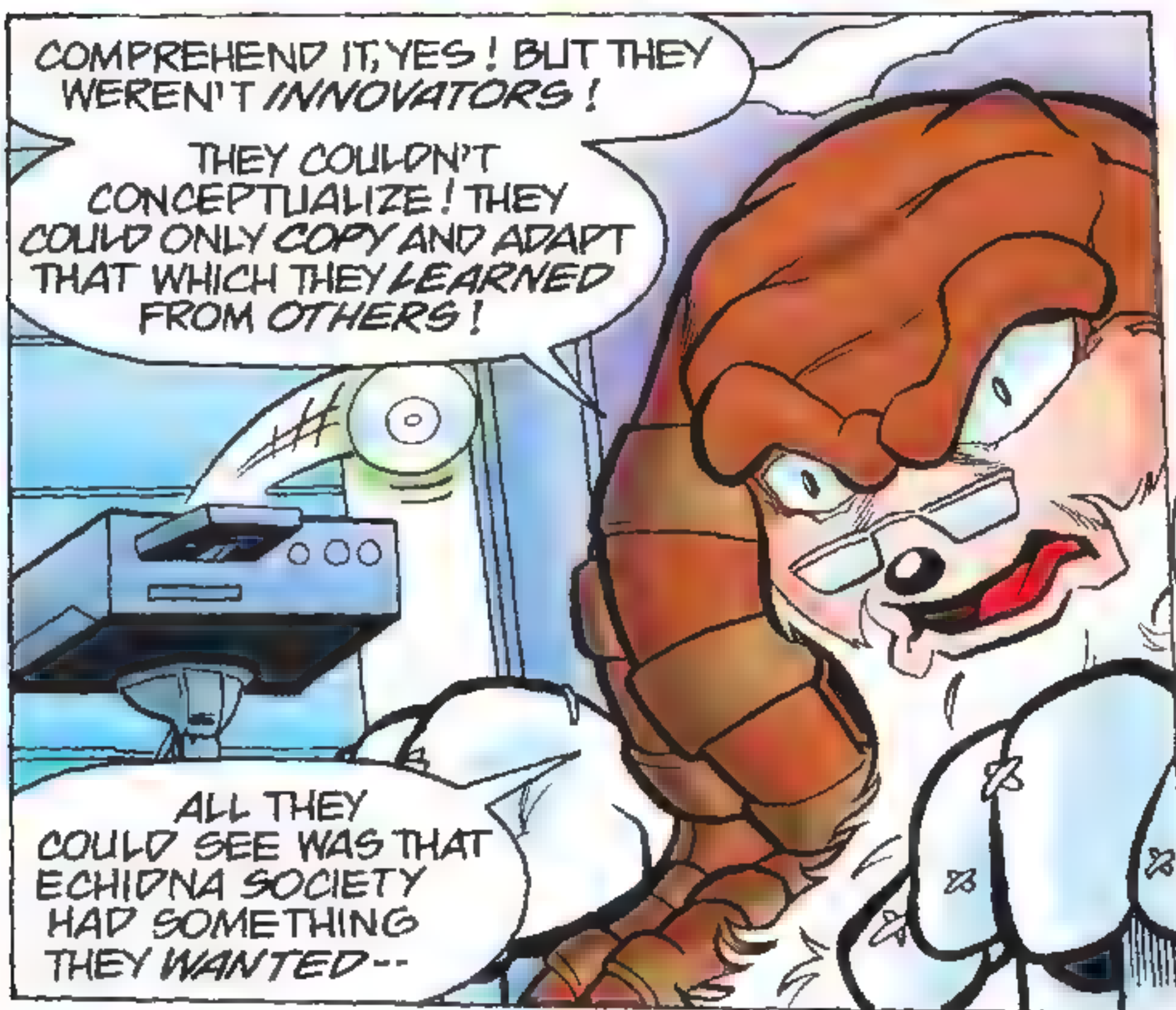
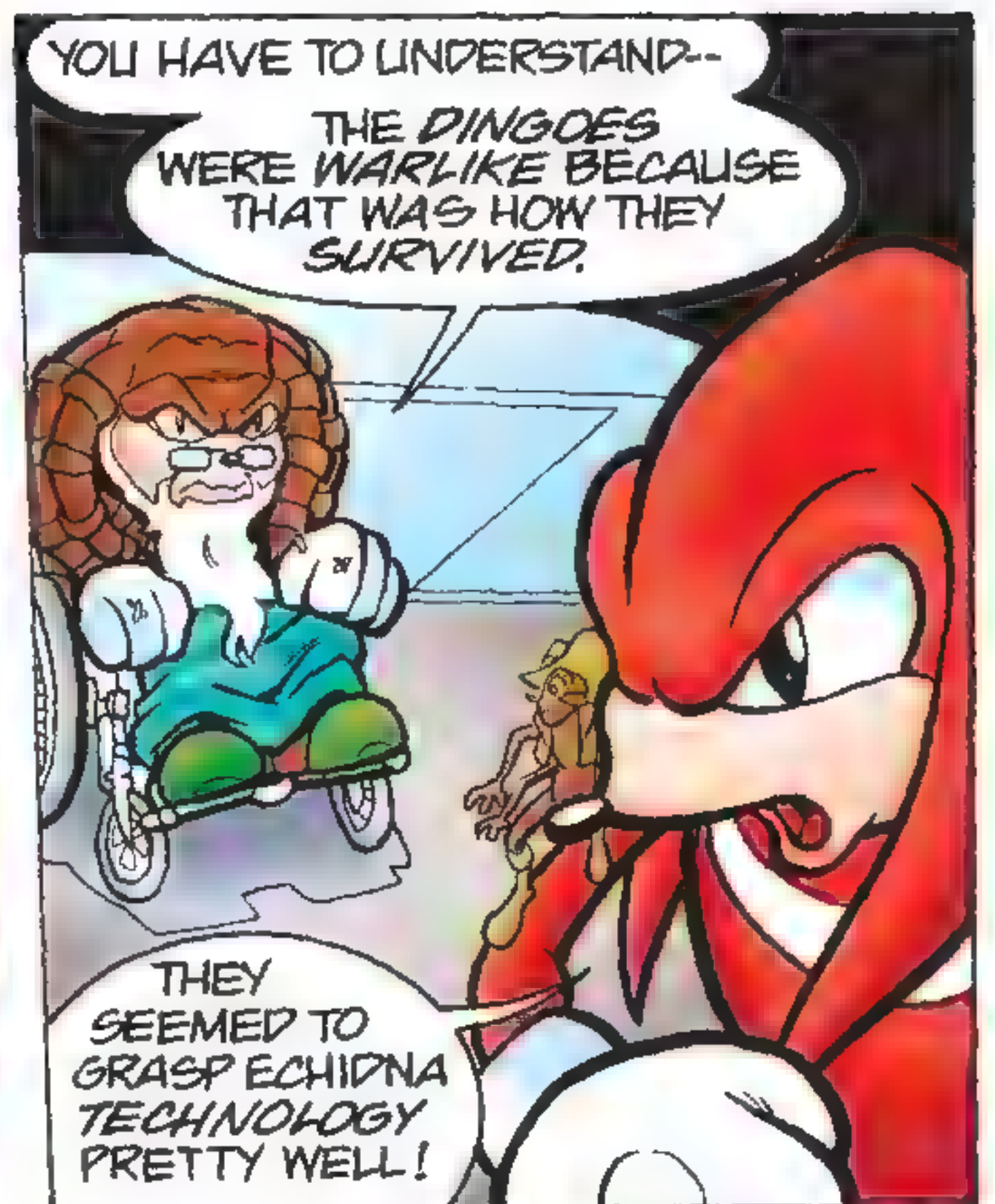
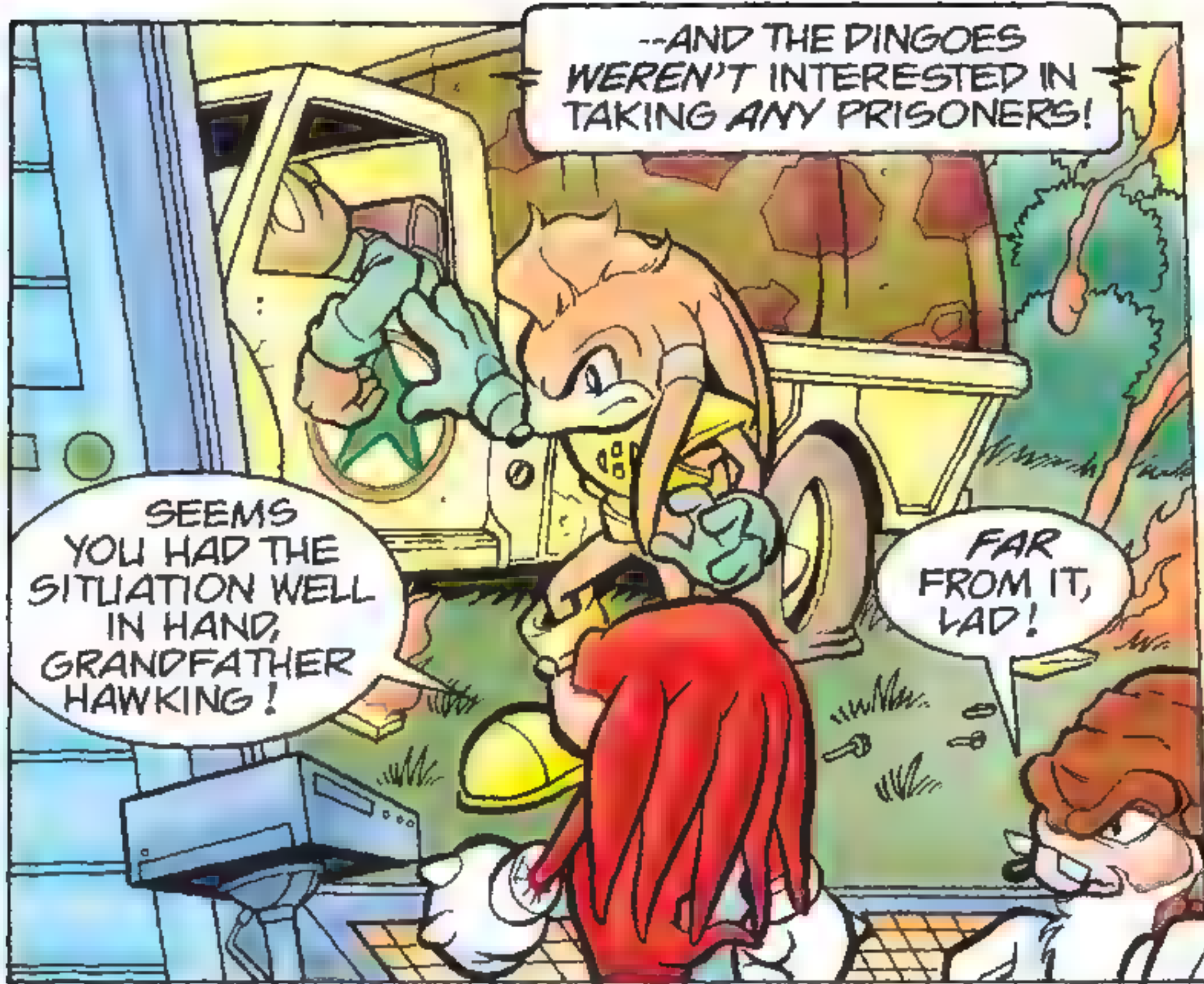
WATCH IT!!!
YOU'LL HIT--!

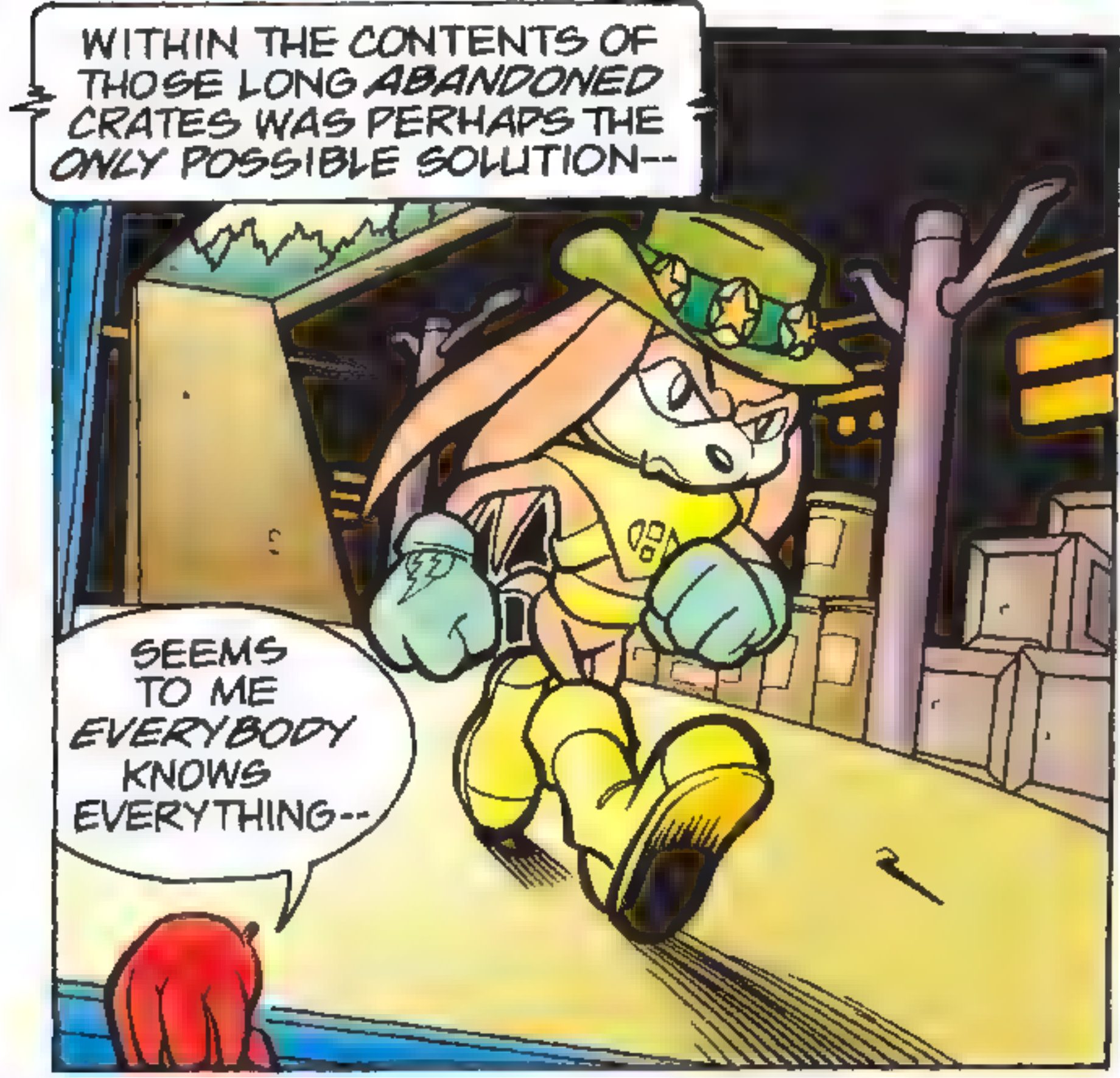
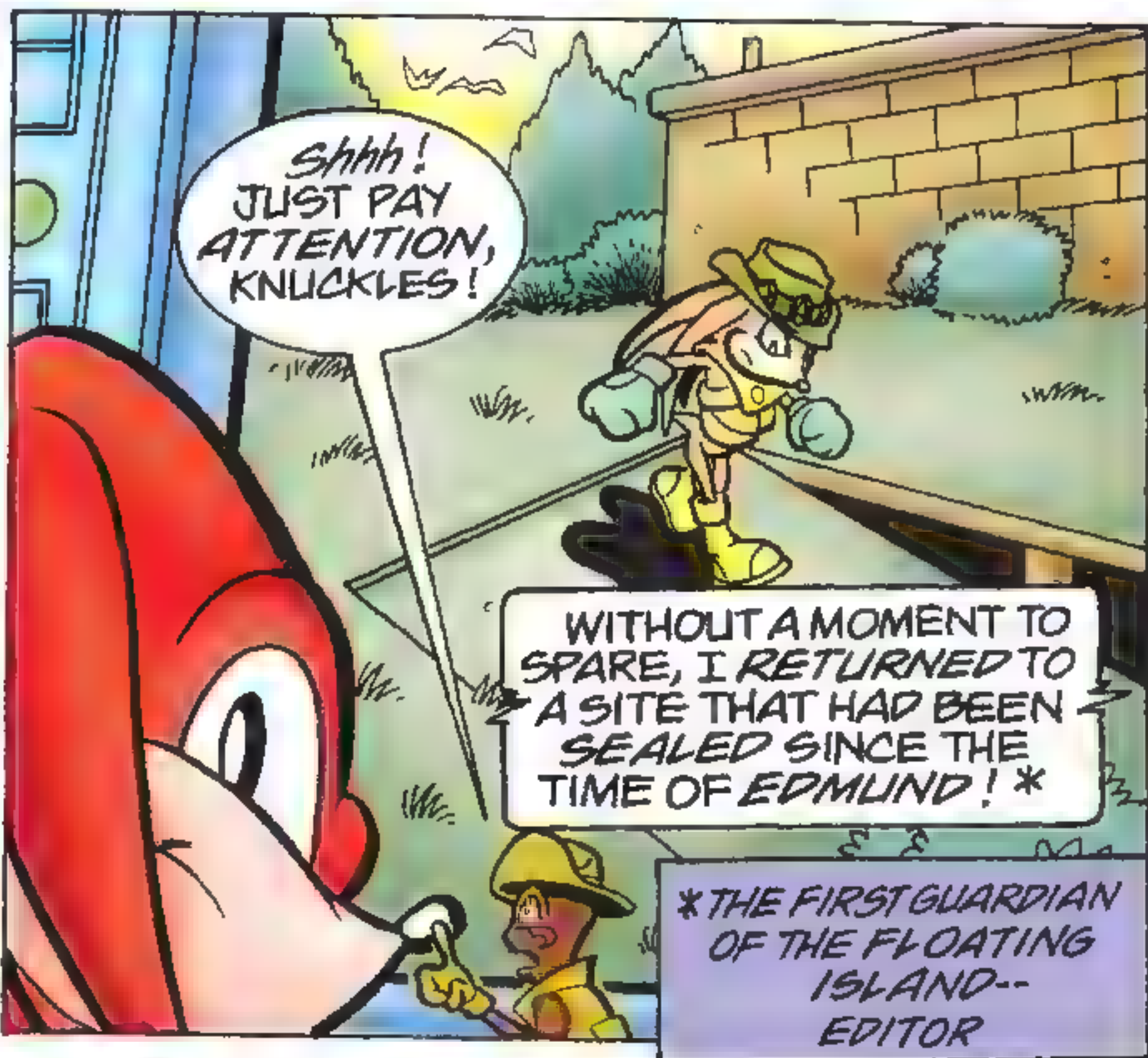
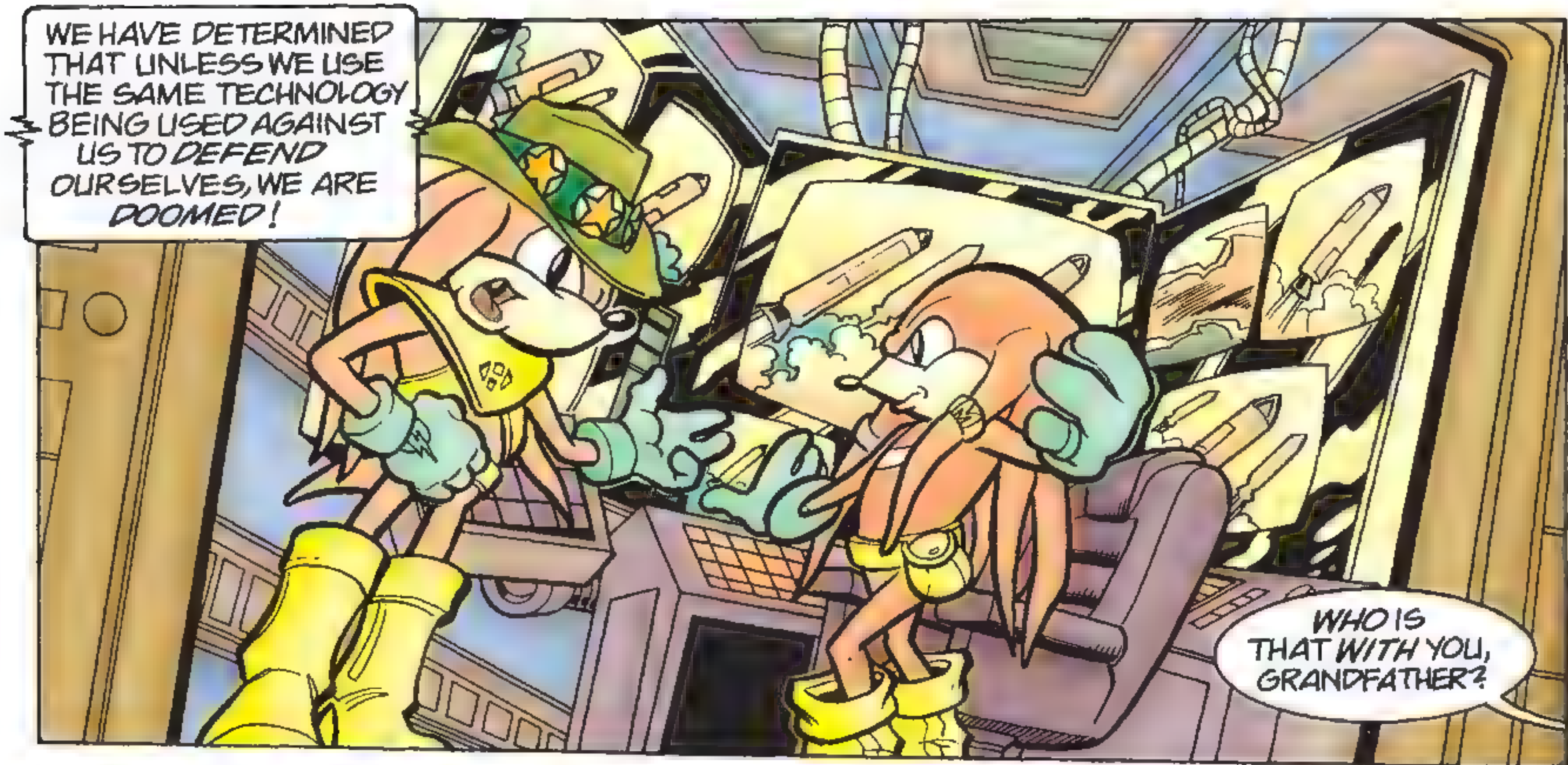
ZAT! ZAT!
ZAT! ZAT!

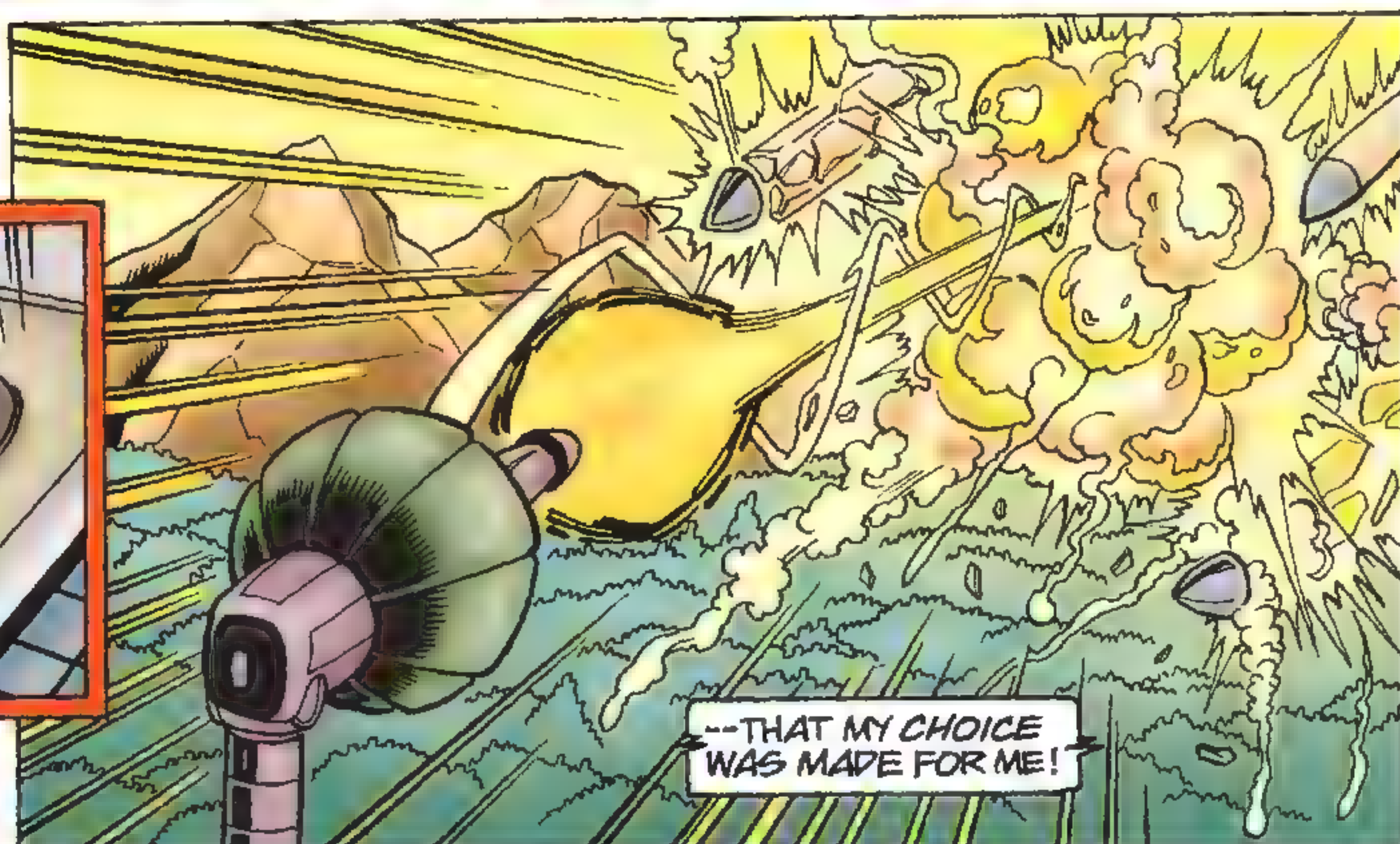
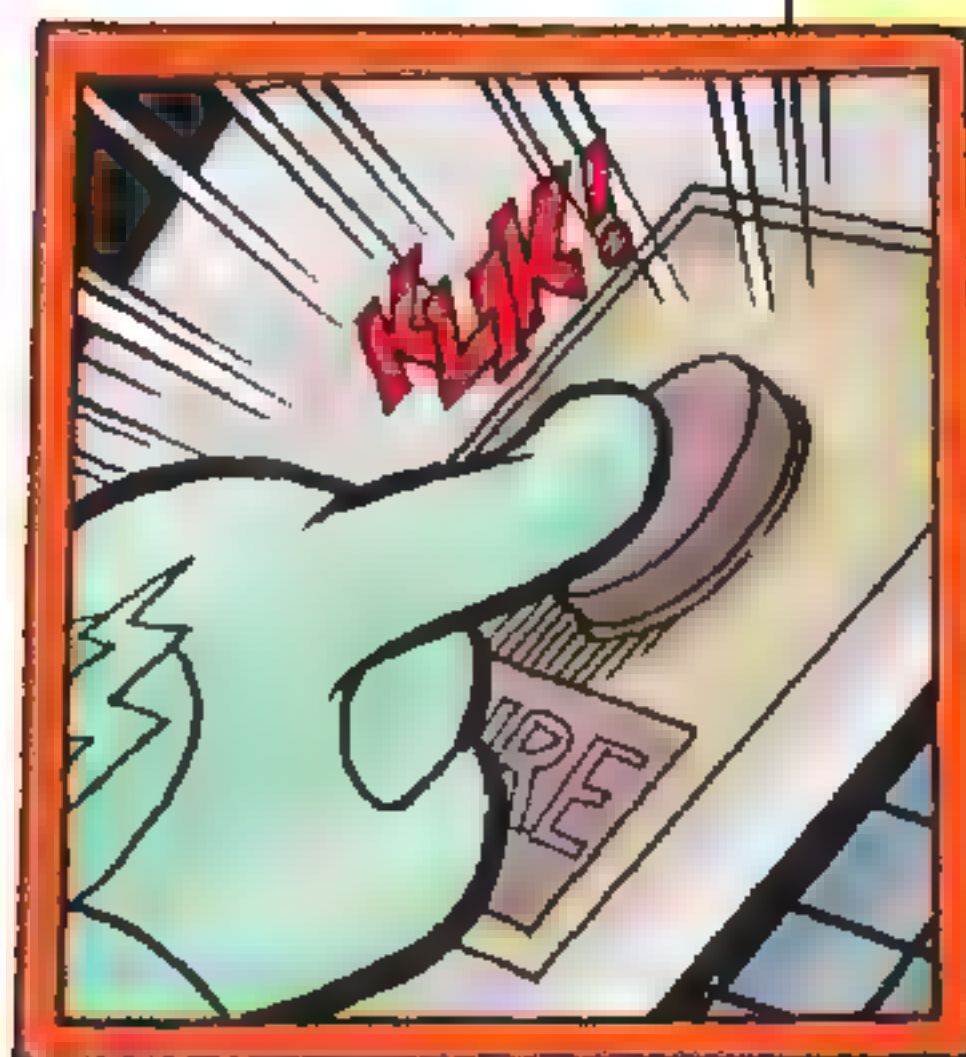
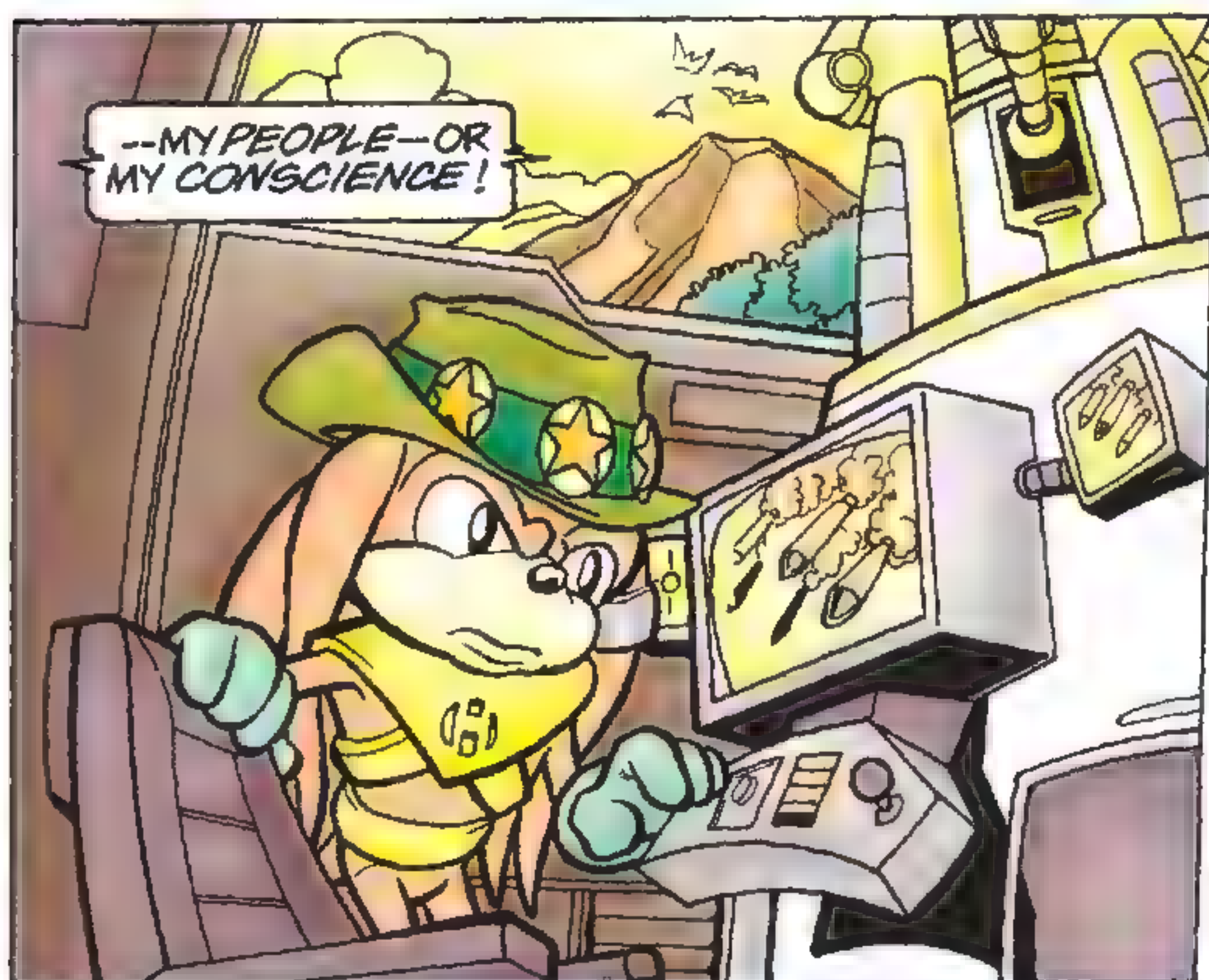
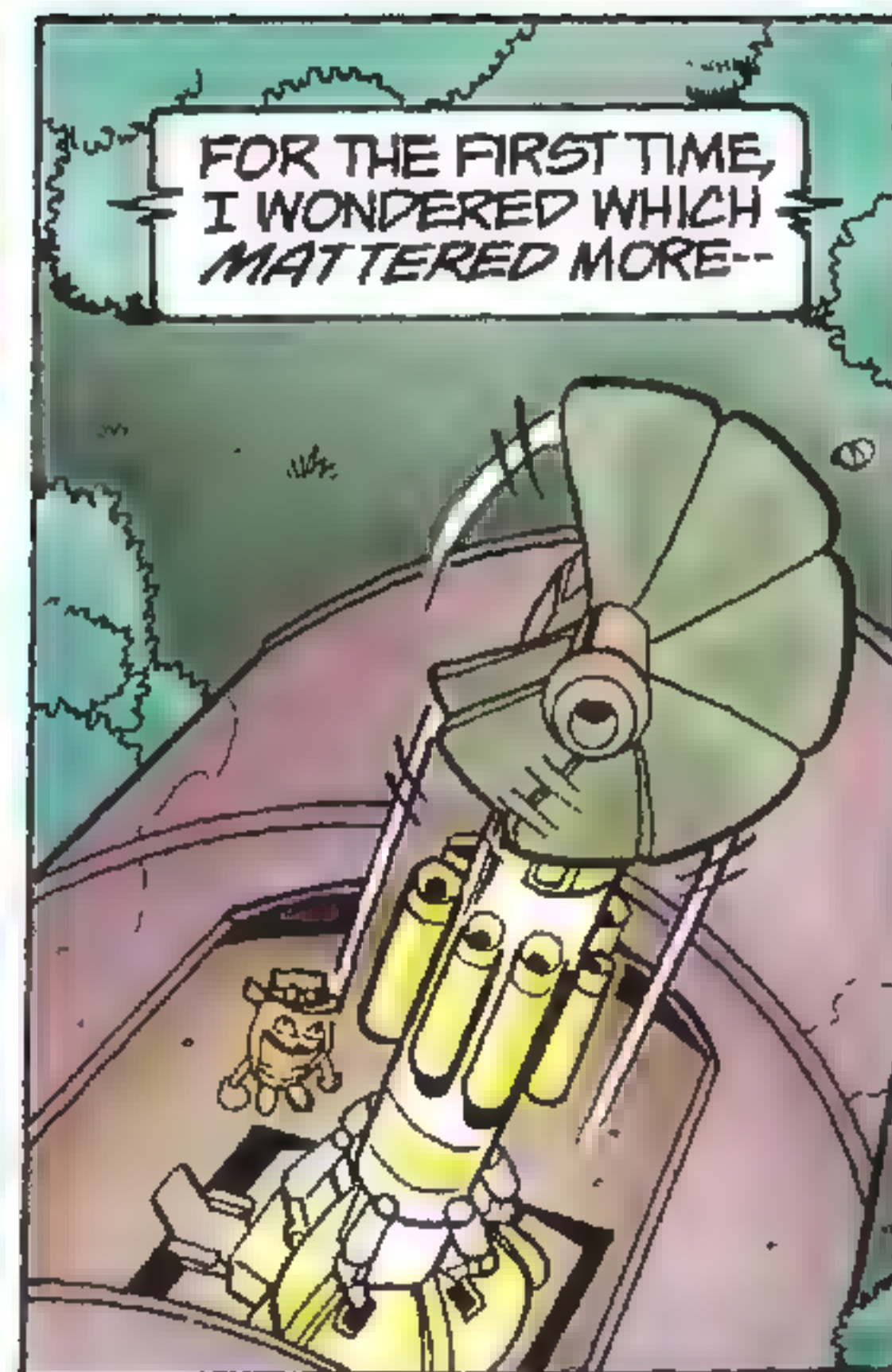
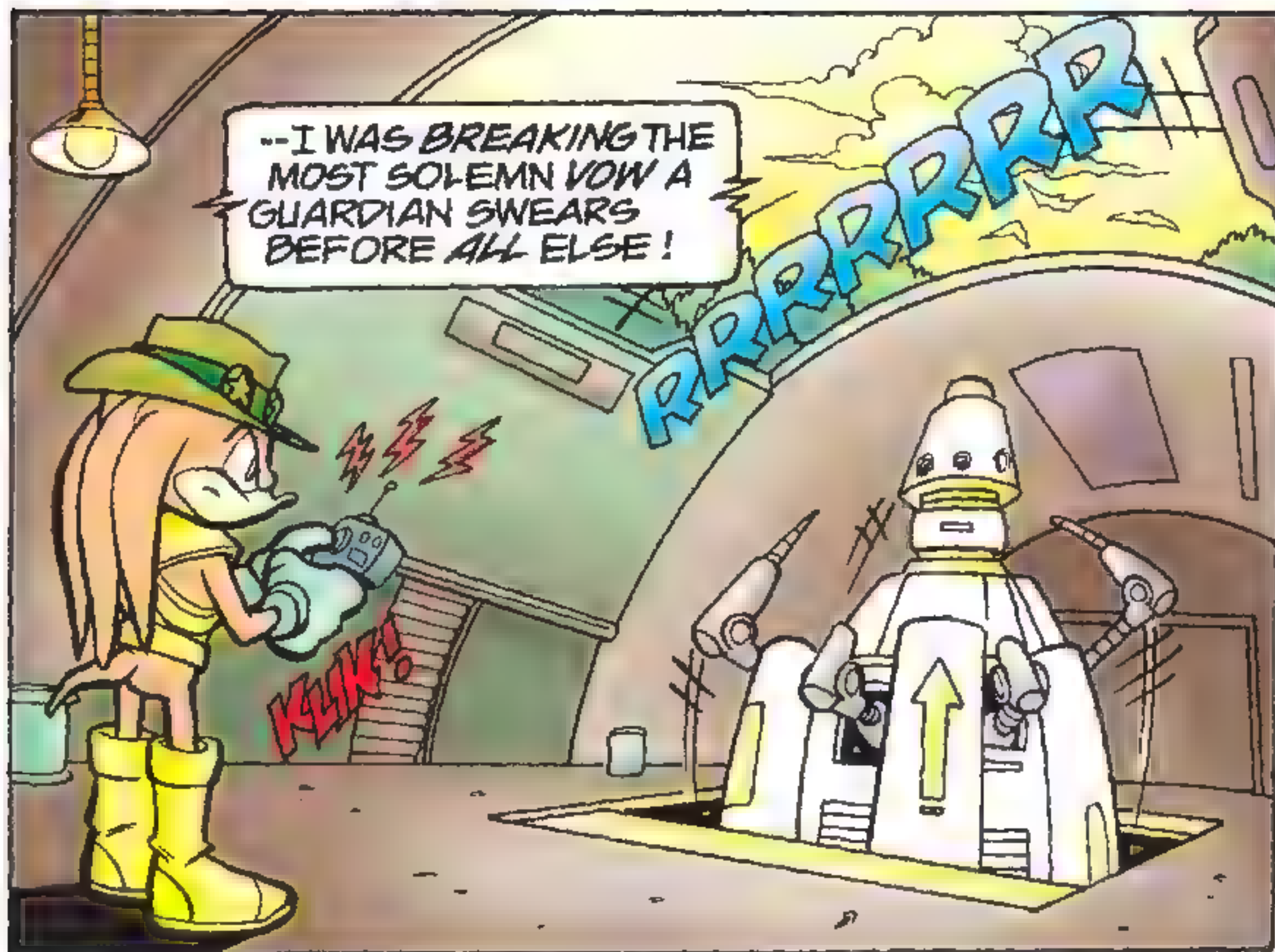
THEY'D RAISE A STINK
ABOUT SOMETHING, WE'D
BEAT THEM BACK, THEY'D
STAY QUIET FOR
AWHILE, AND THE CYCLE
WOULD BEGIN AGAIN!

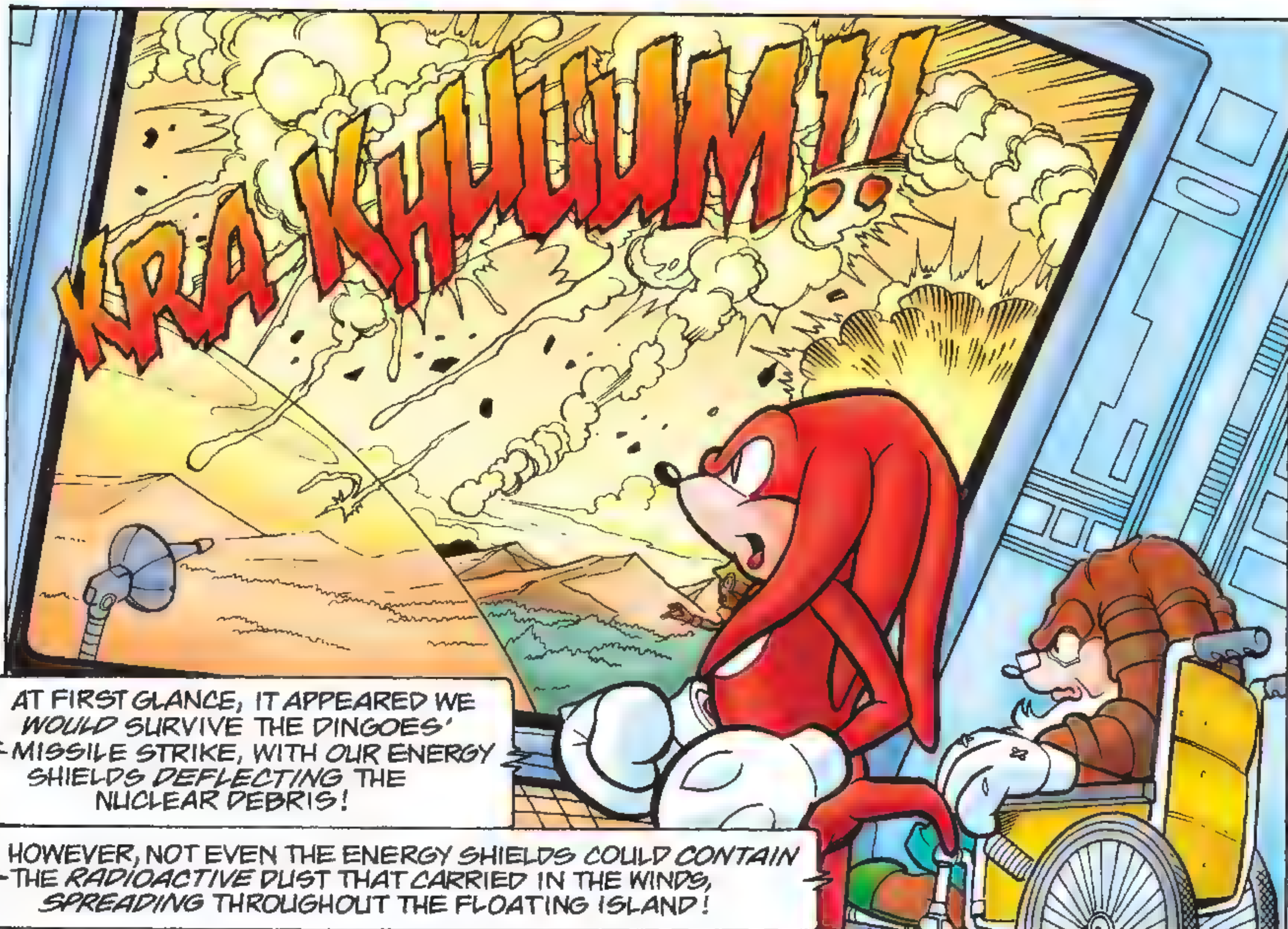


NOW, A TURNING
POINT HAD BEEN
REACHED--







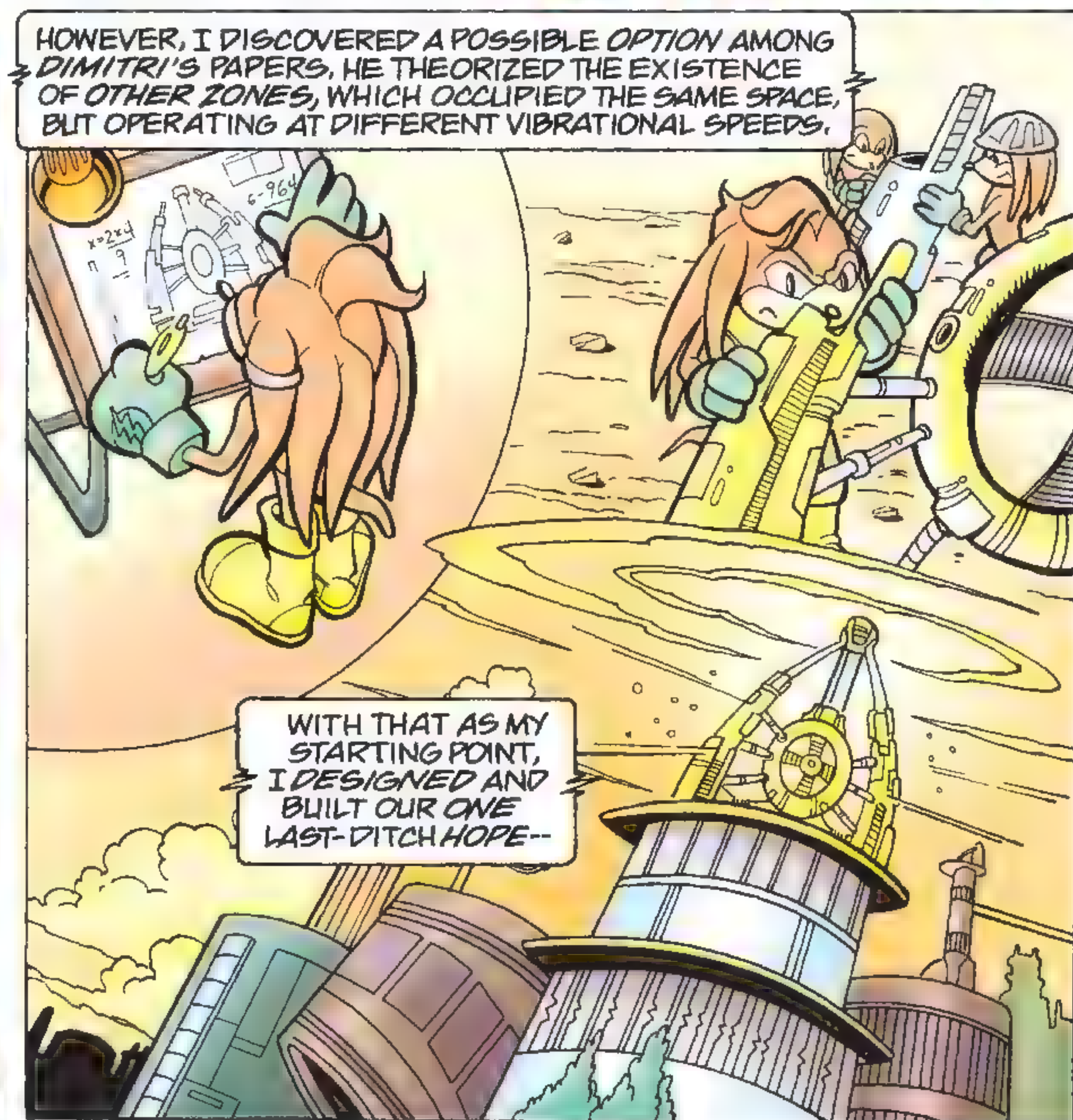


AT FIRST GLANCE, IT APPEARED WE WOULD SURVIVE THE DINGOES' MISSILE STRIKE, WITH OUR ENERGY SHIELDS DEFLECTING THE NUCLEAR DEBRIS!

HOWEVER, NOT EVEN THE ENERGY SHIELDS COULD CONTAIN THE RADIOACTIVE DUST THAT CARRIED IN THE WINDS, SPREADING THROUGHOUT THE FLOATING ISLAND!



SINCE THE ENTIRE ISLAND STOOD TO BE AFFECTED, EVACUATION WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION.



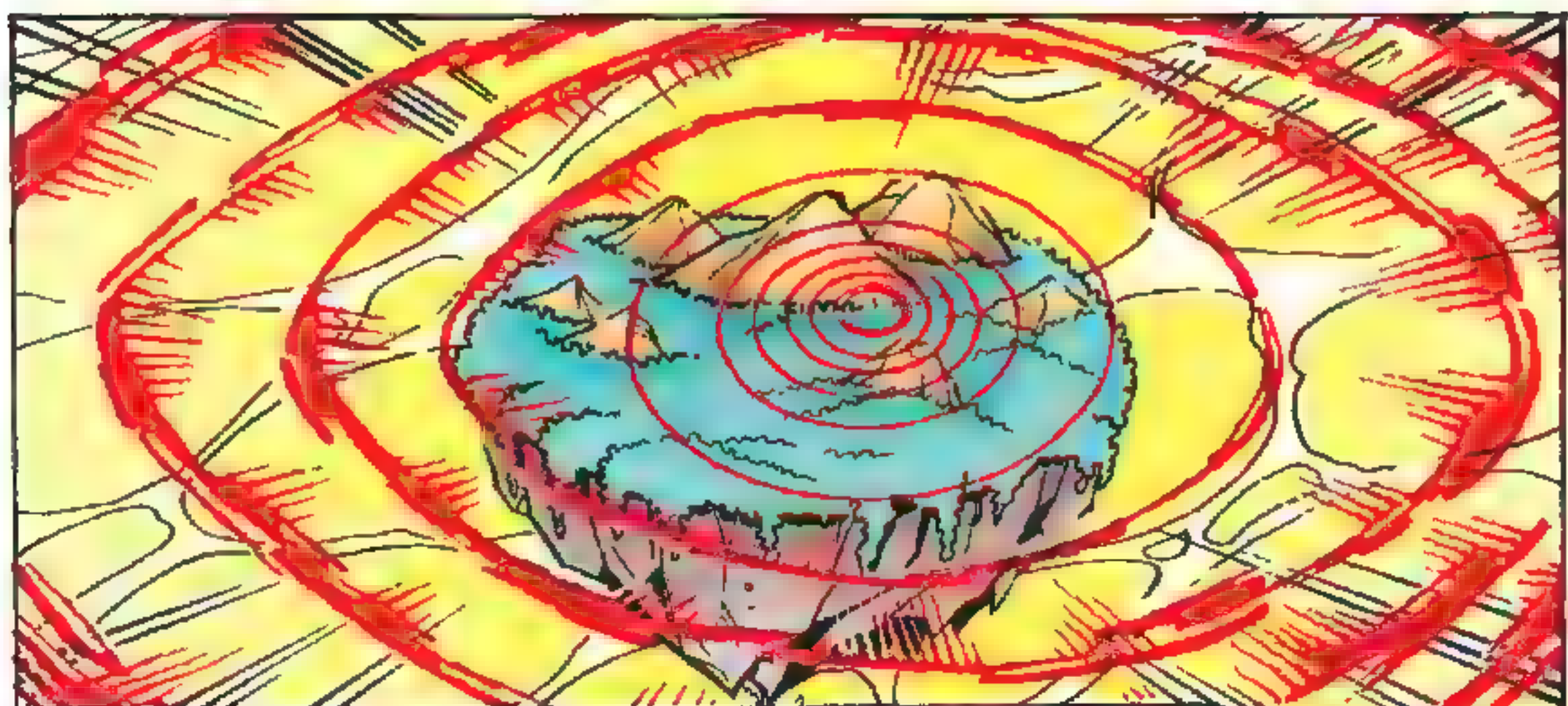
HOWEVER, I DISCOVERED A POSSIBLE OPTION AMONG DIMITRI'S PAPERS, HE THEORIZED THE EXISTENCE OF OTHER ZONES, WHICH OCCUPIED THE SAME SPACE, BUT OPERATING AT DIFFERENT VIBRATIONAL SPEEDS.

WITH THAT AS MY STARTING POINT, I DESIGNED AND BUILT OUR ONE LAST-DITCH HOPE--

--THE HYPER ZONE PROJECTOR.

WE WOULD USE IT TO TRANSPORT ECHIDNA-
OPOLIS AND ITS
CITIZENS TO THE SAFE
ENVIRONMENT OF
ANOTHER ZONE ON A
TEMPORARY BASIS--

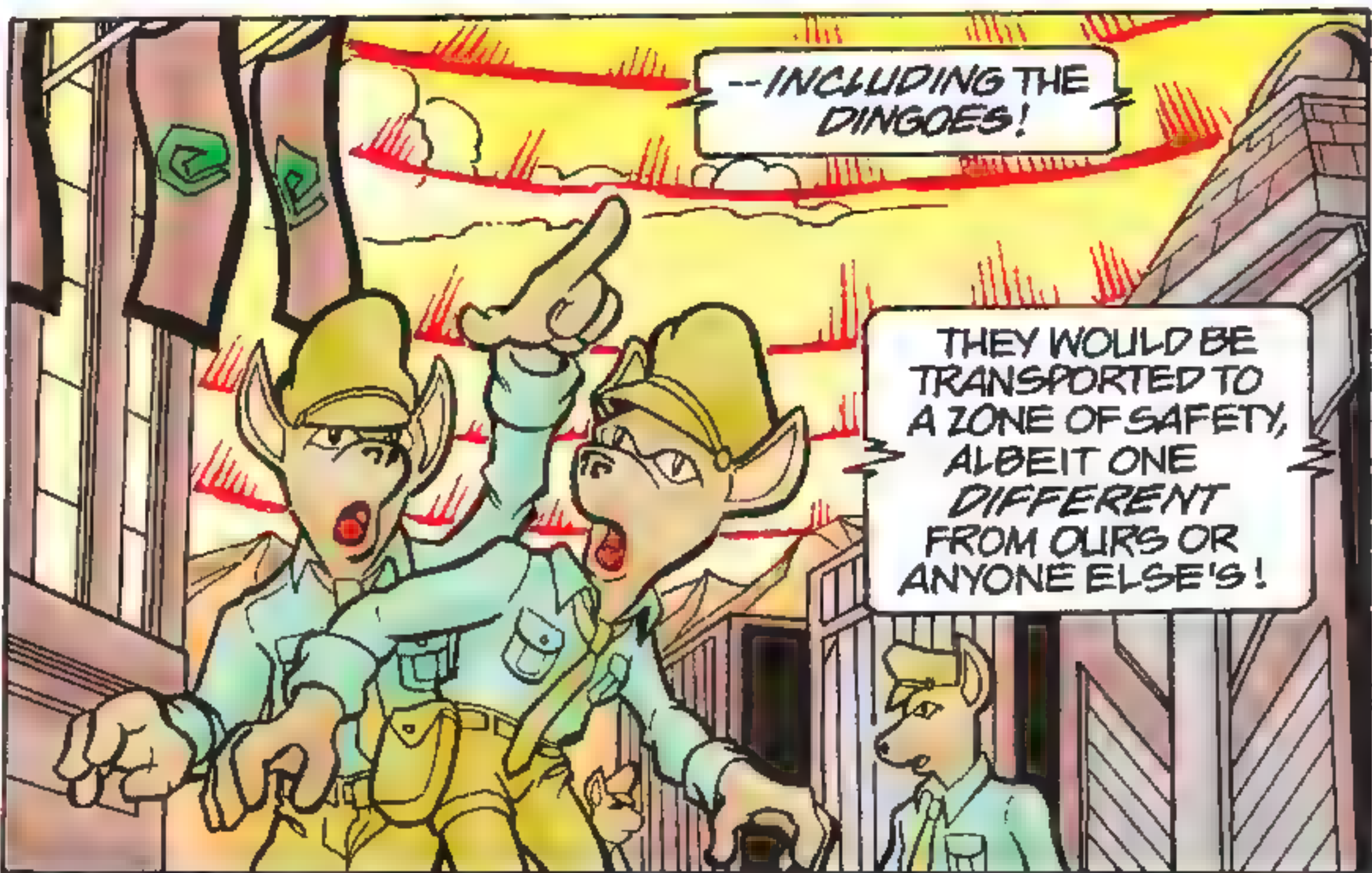
--UNTIL SUCH TIME
AS THE RADIOACTIVE
WASTE
WAS CLEANED UP.



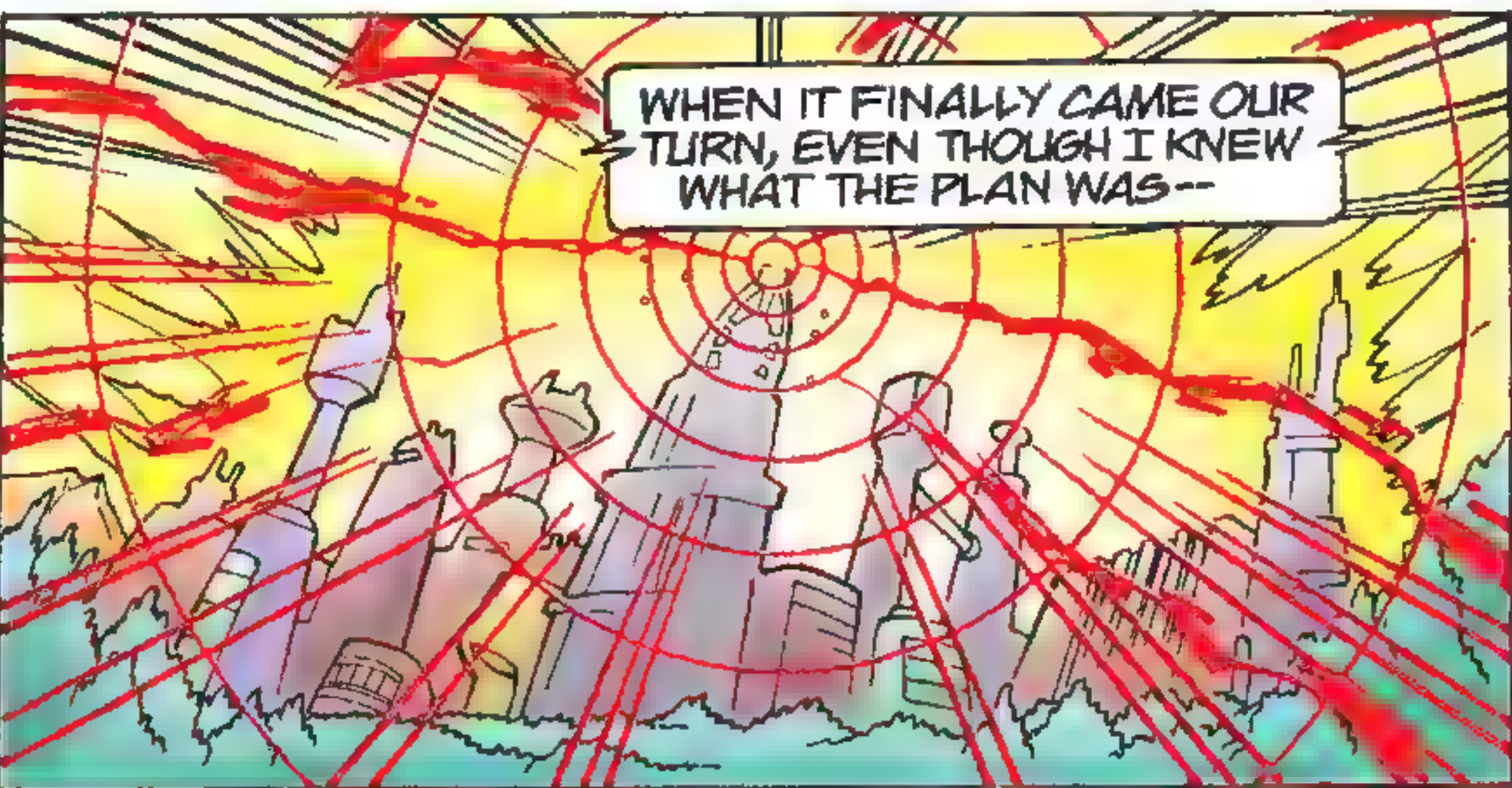
AS I WAS GUARDIAN OF THE FLOATING ISLAND,
I HAD A RESPONSIBILITY TO ALL WHO INHABITED
ITS MANY STRANGE AND WONDROUS REGIONS--

--INCLUDING THE
DINGOES!

THEY WOULD BE
TRANSPORTED TO
A ZONE OF SAFETY,
ALBEIT ONE
DIFFERENT
FROM OURS OR
ANYONE ELSE'S!

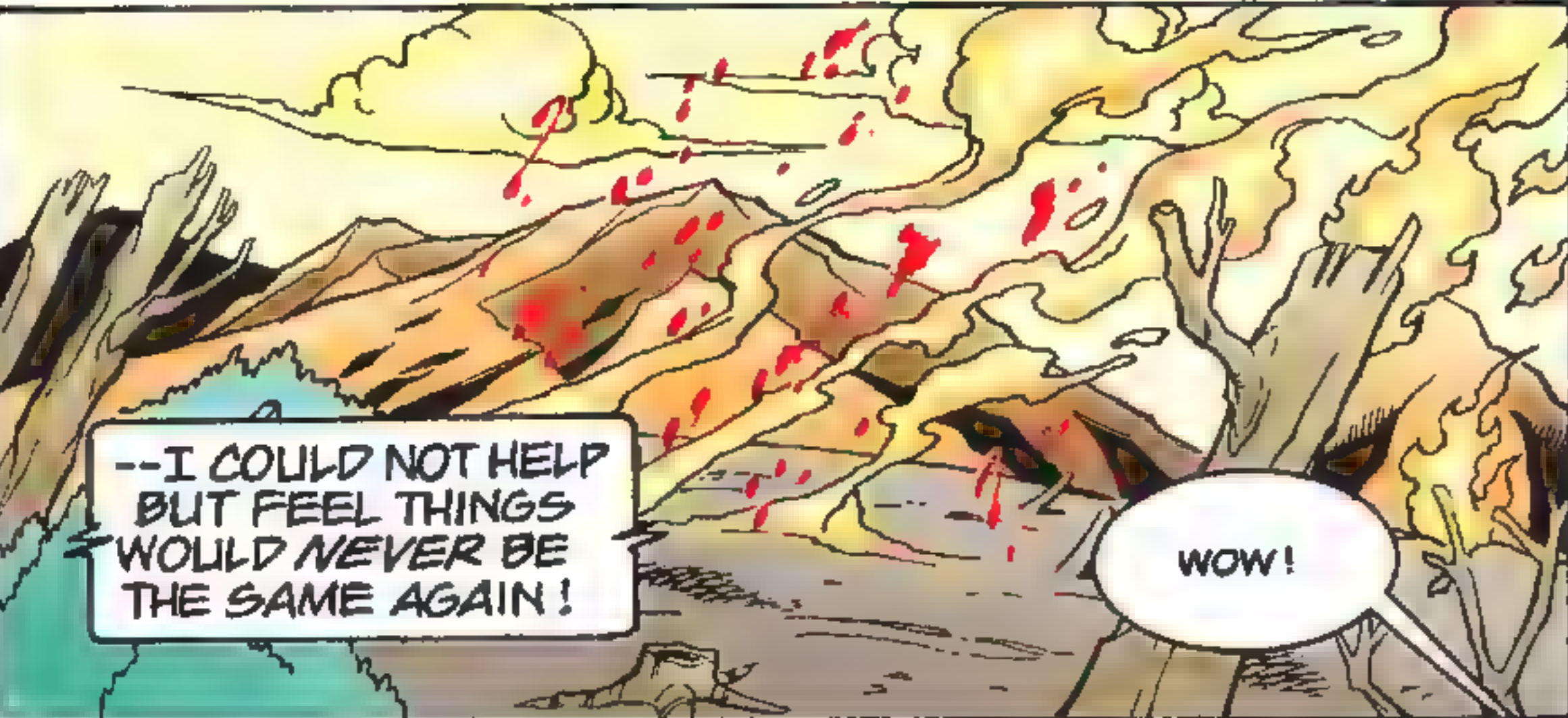


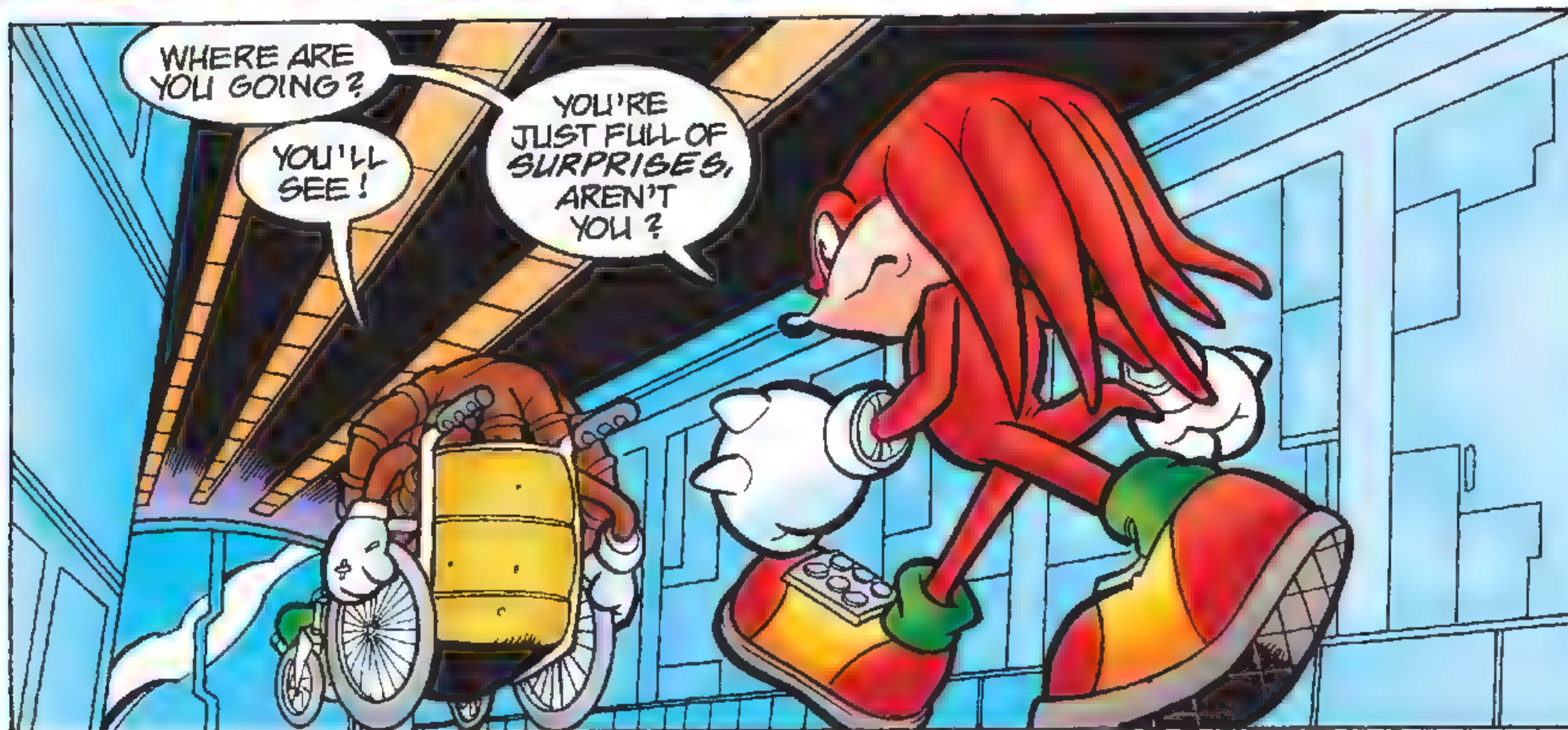
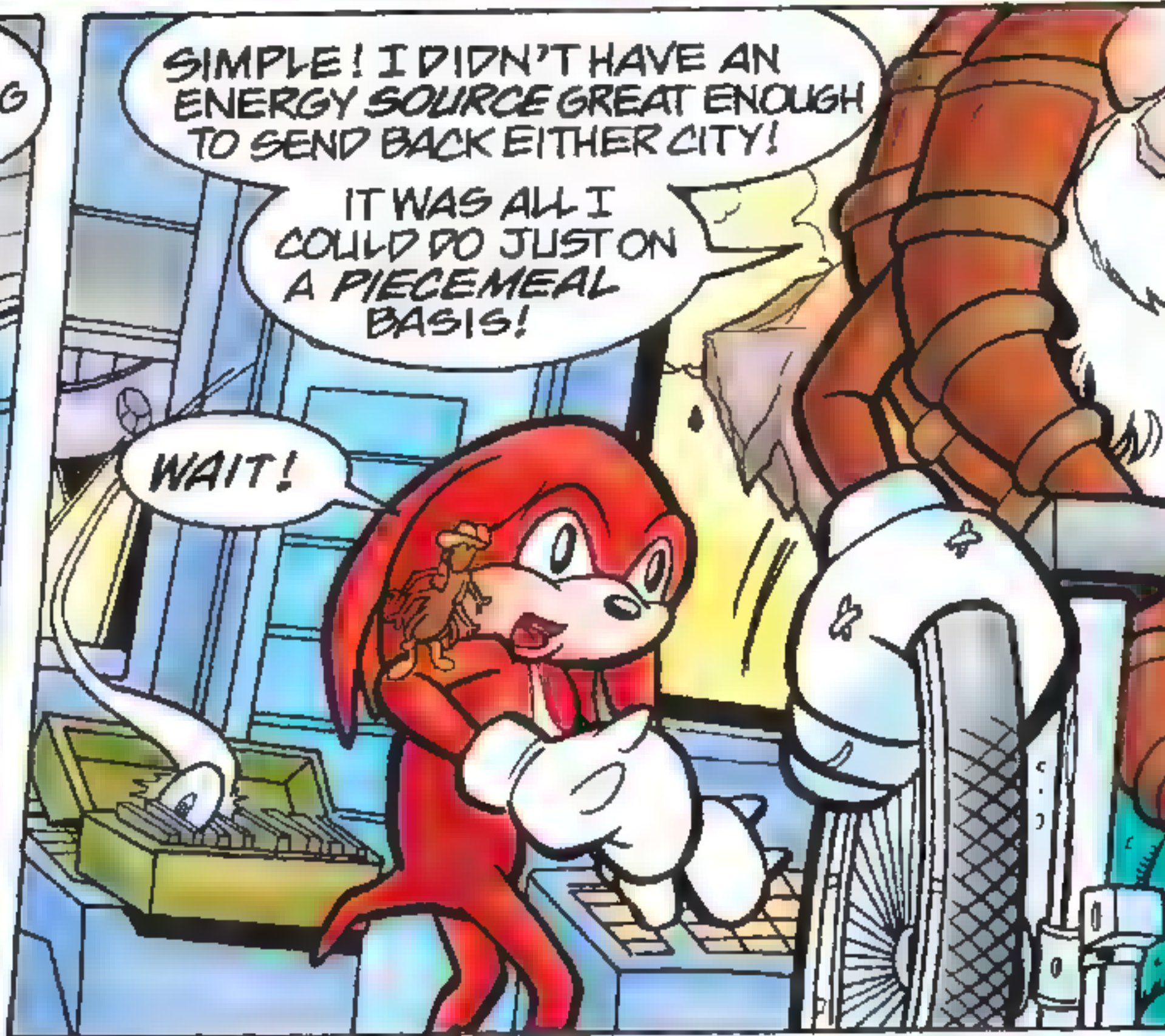
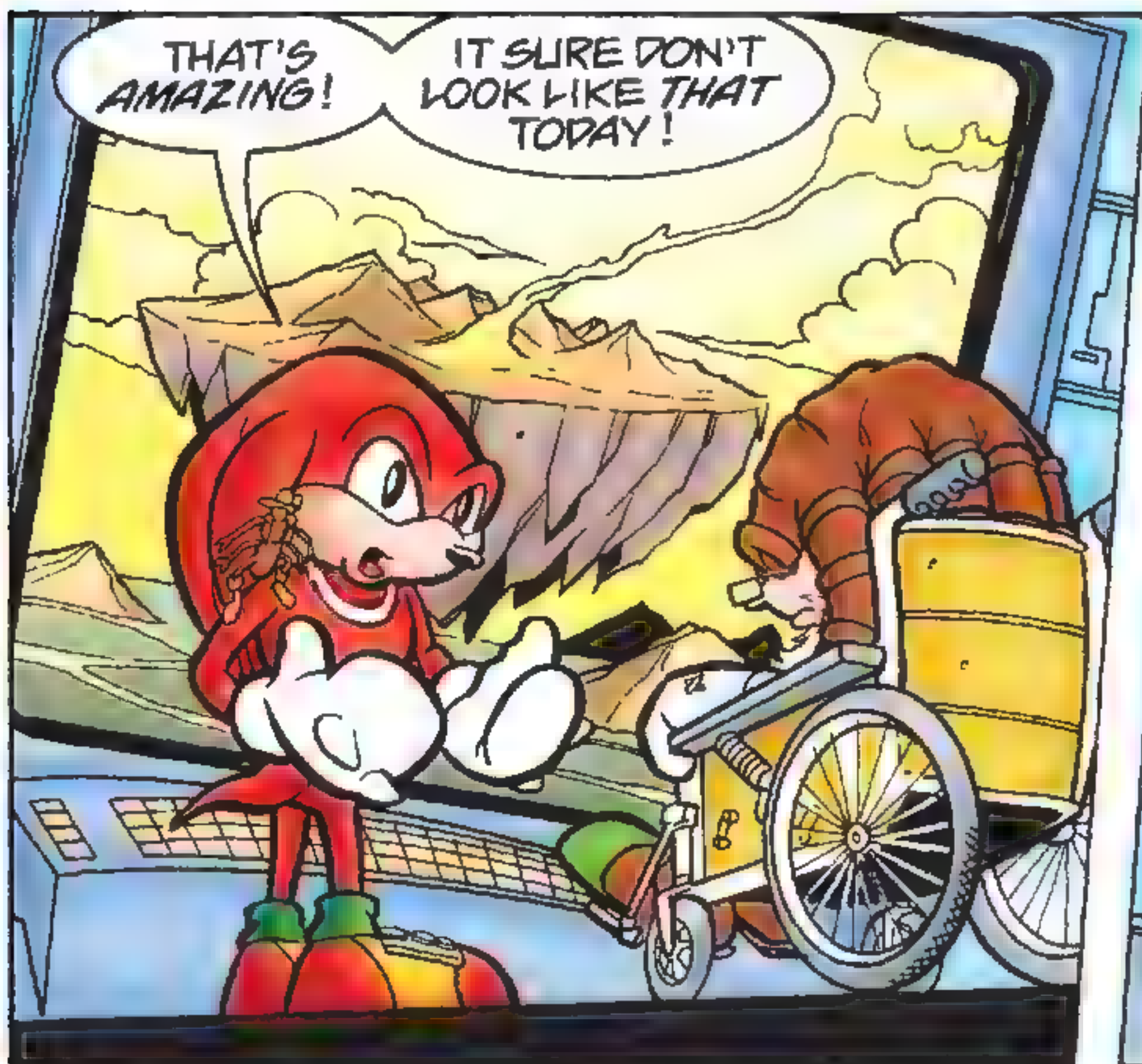
WHEN IT FINALLY CAME OUR
TURN, EVEN THOUGH I KNEW
WHAT THE PLAN WAS--

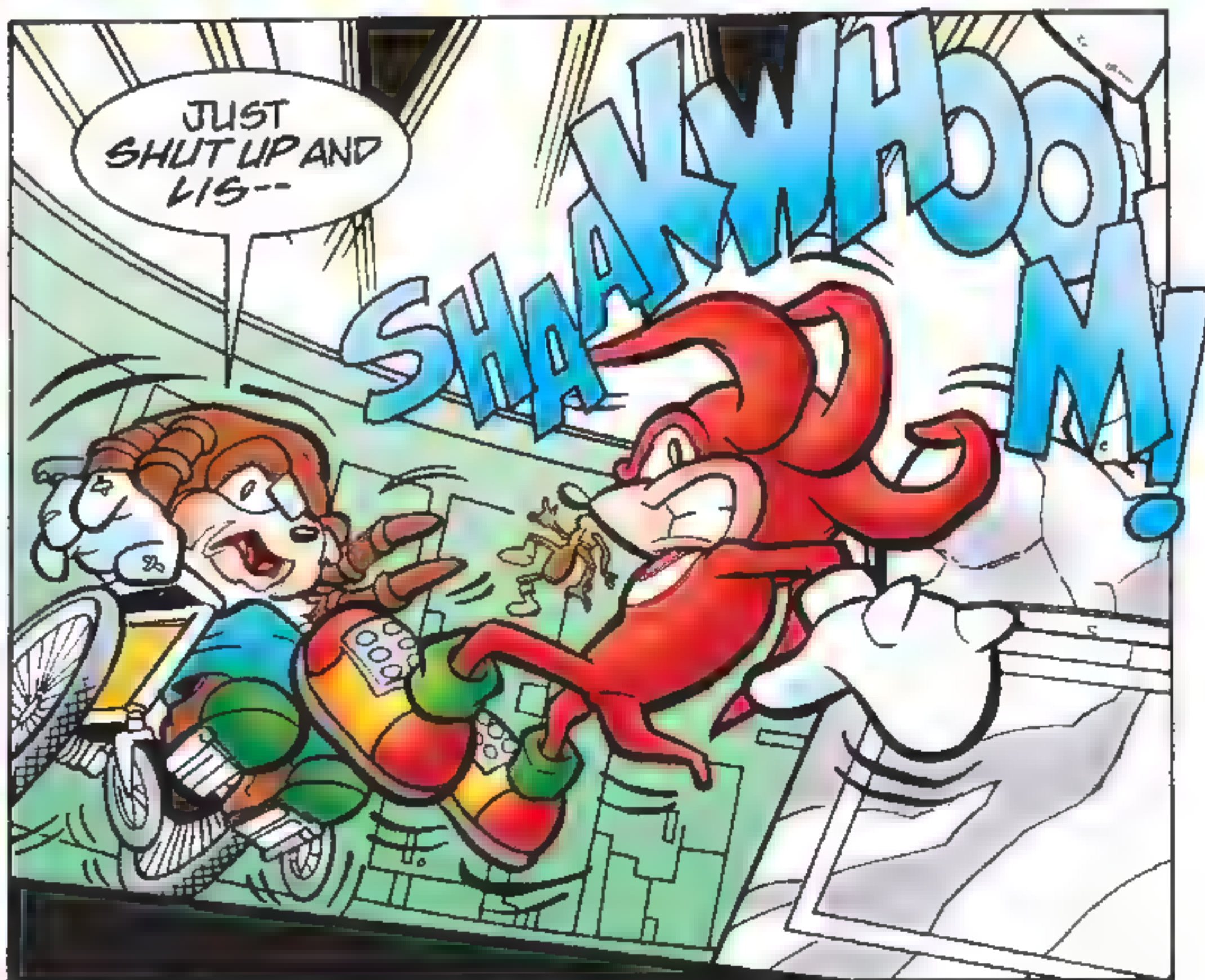
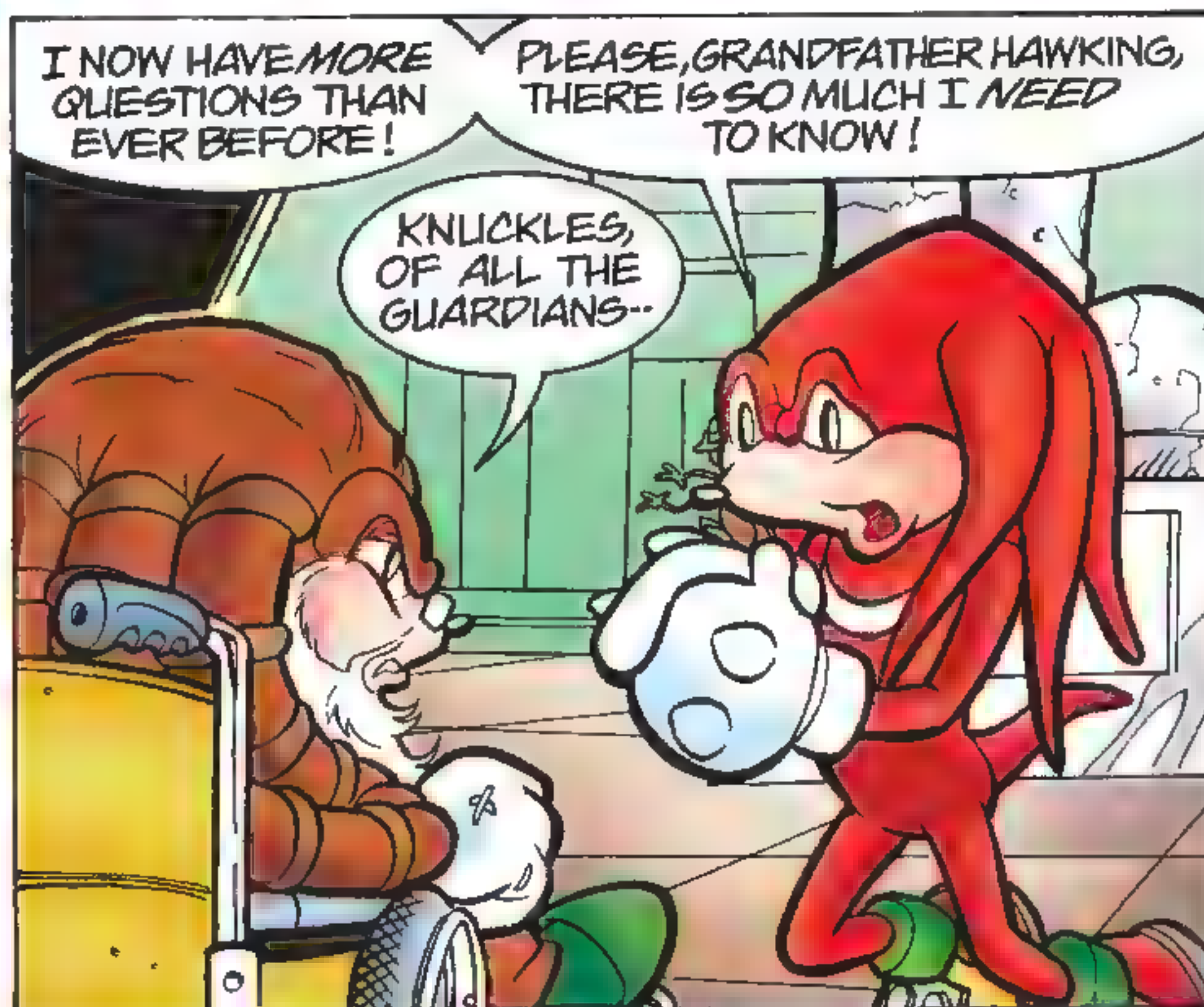
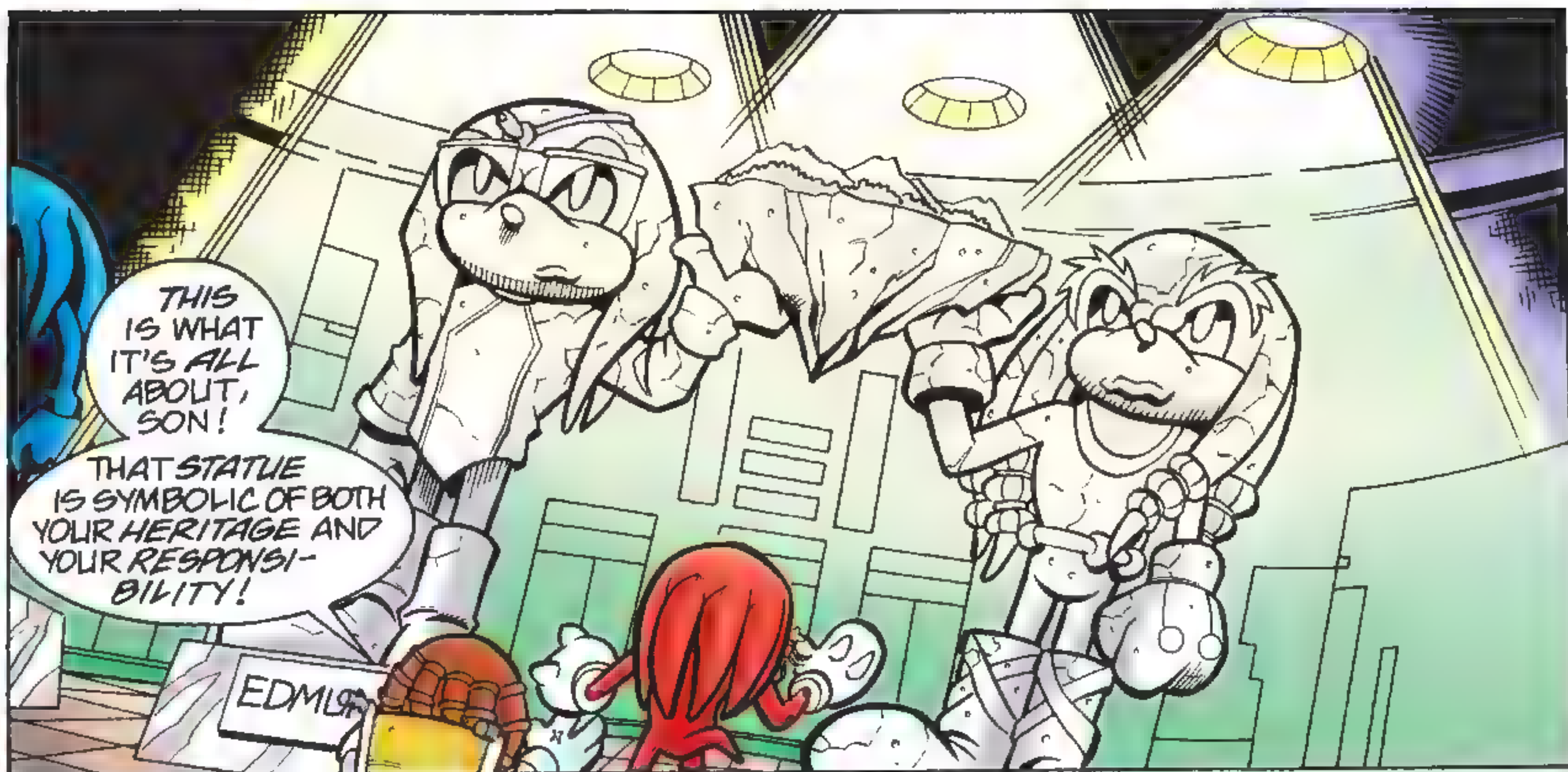


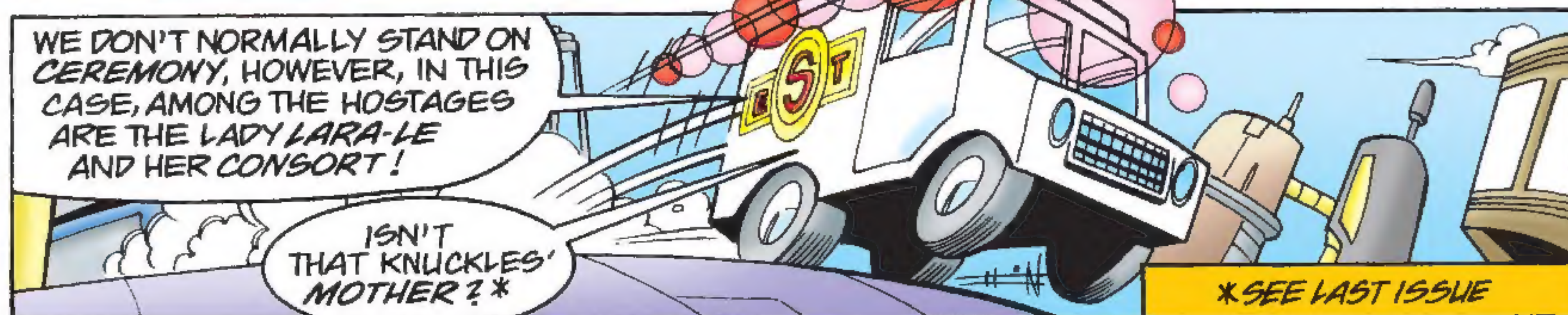
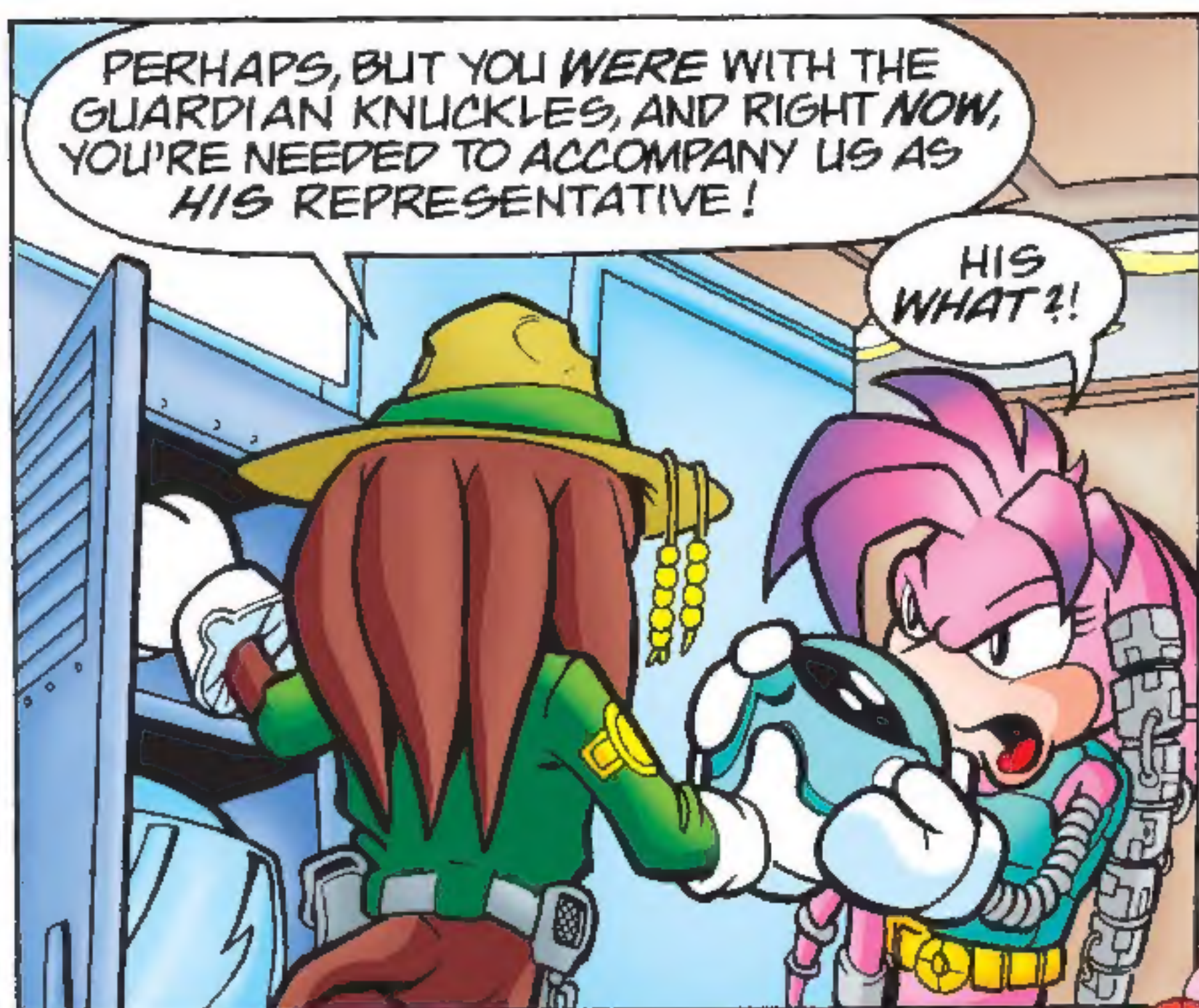
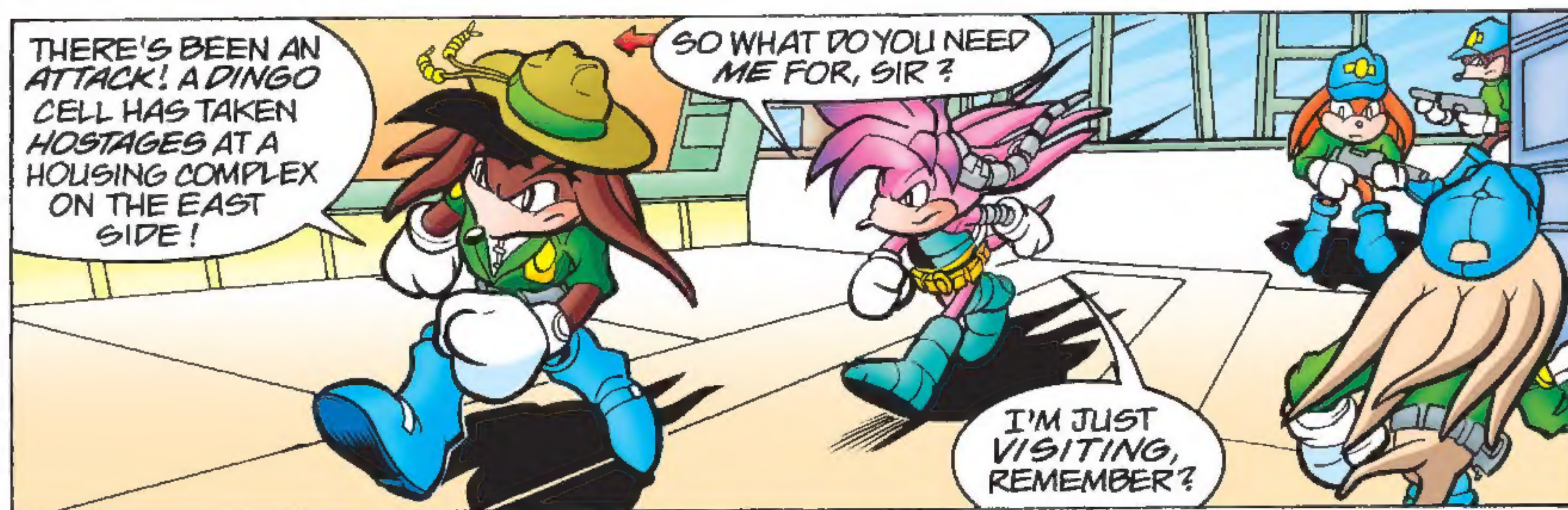
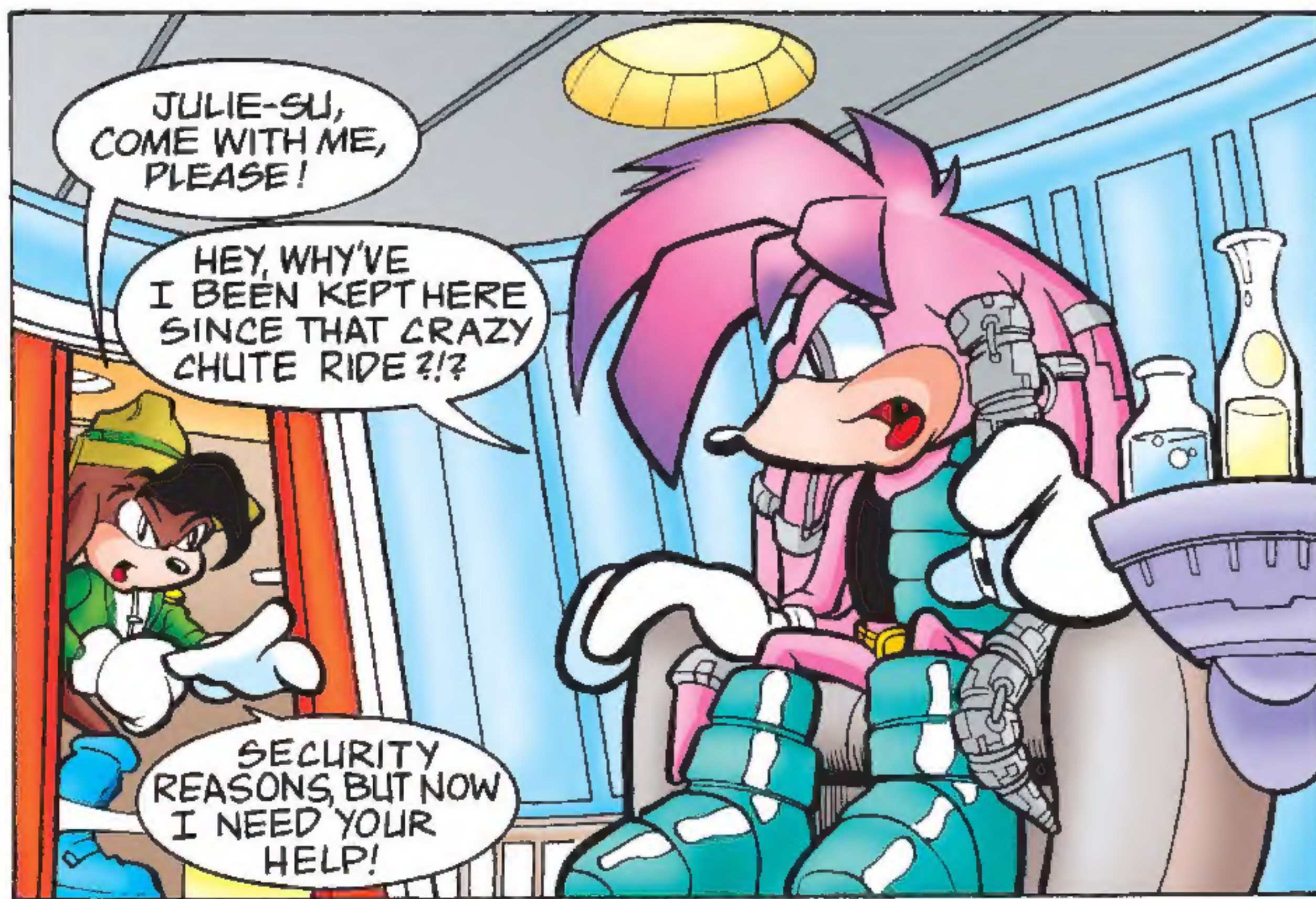
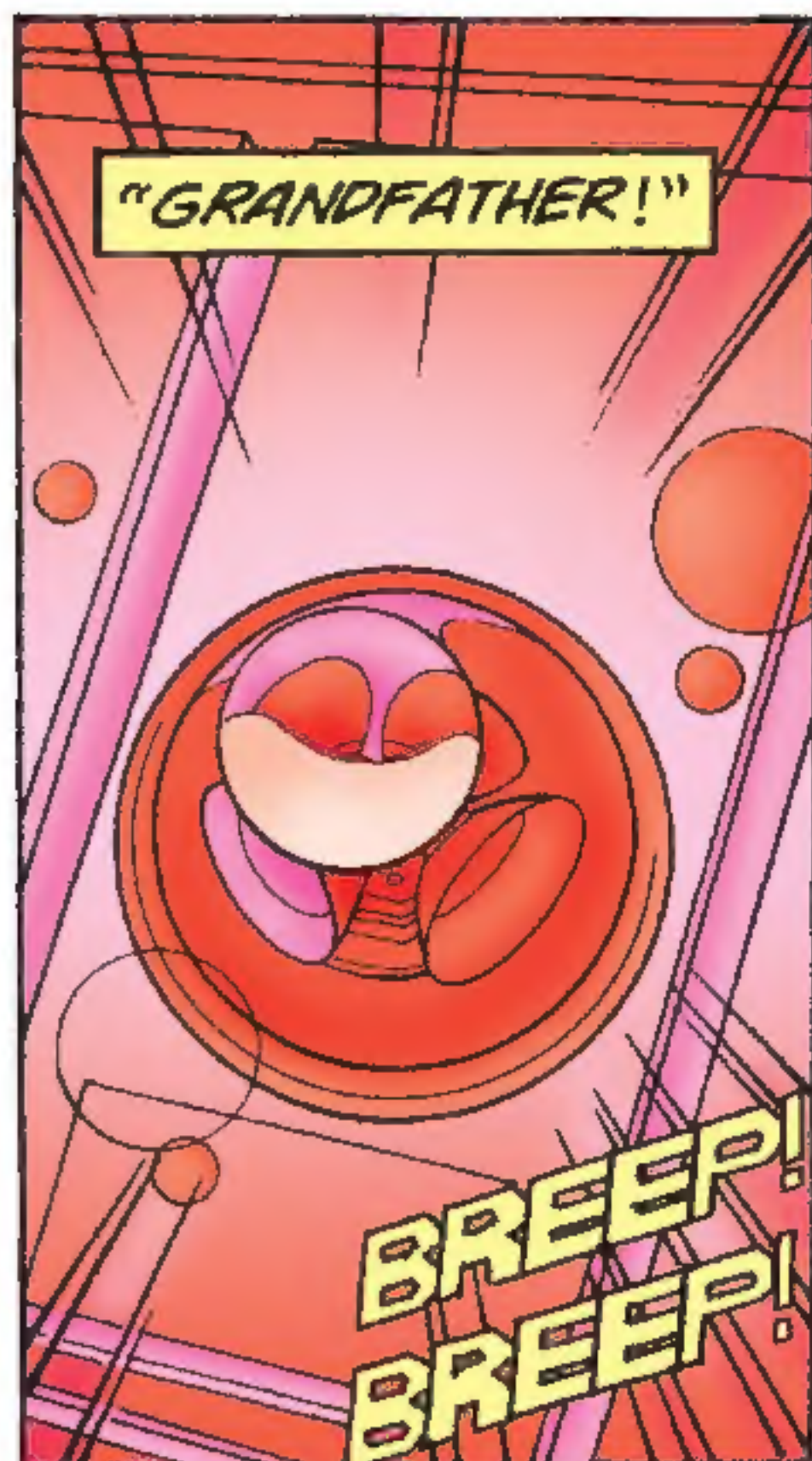
--I COULD NOT HELP
BUT FEEL THINGS
WOULD NEVER BE
THE SAME AGAIN!

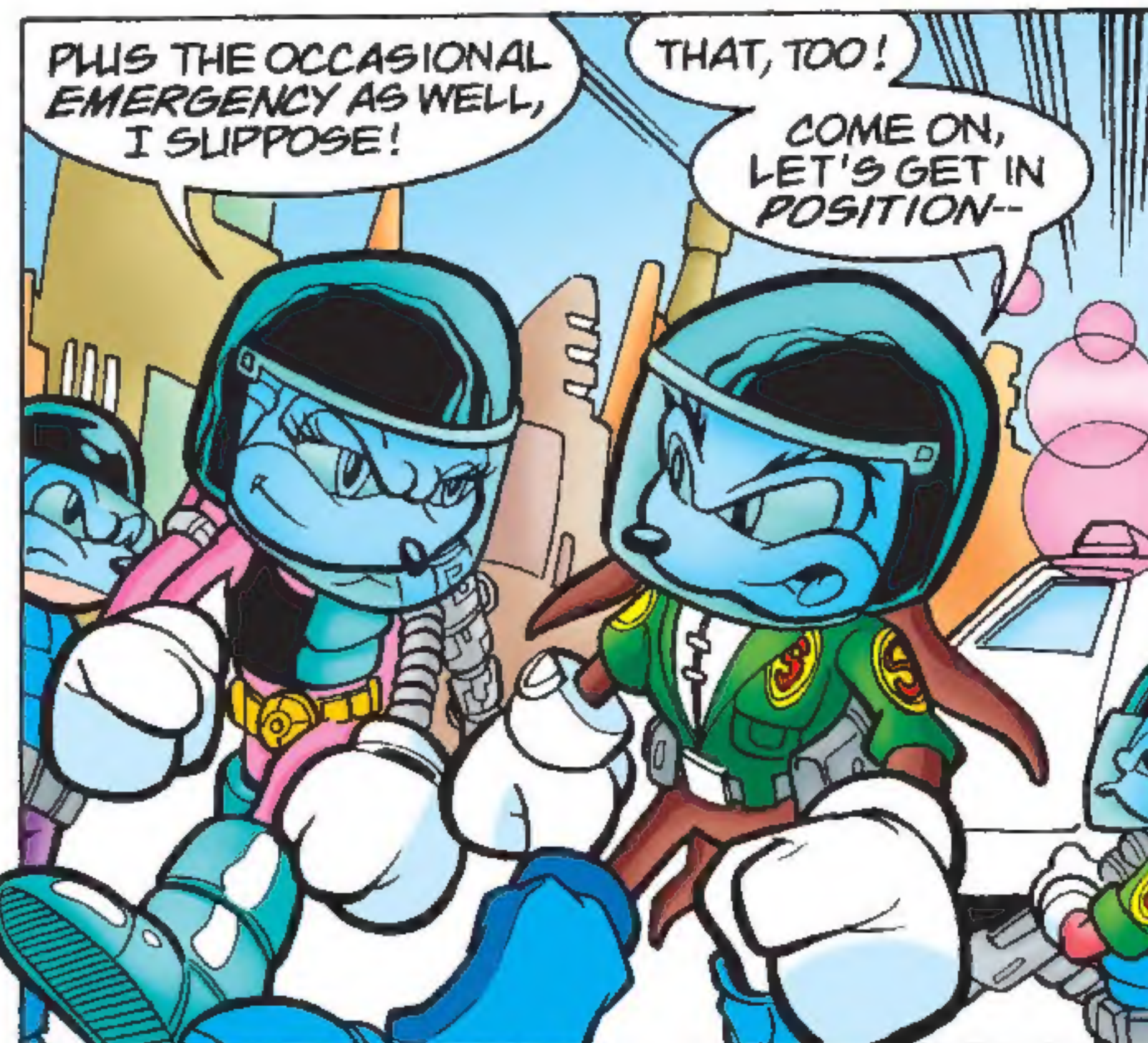
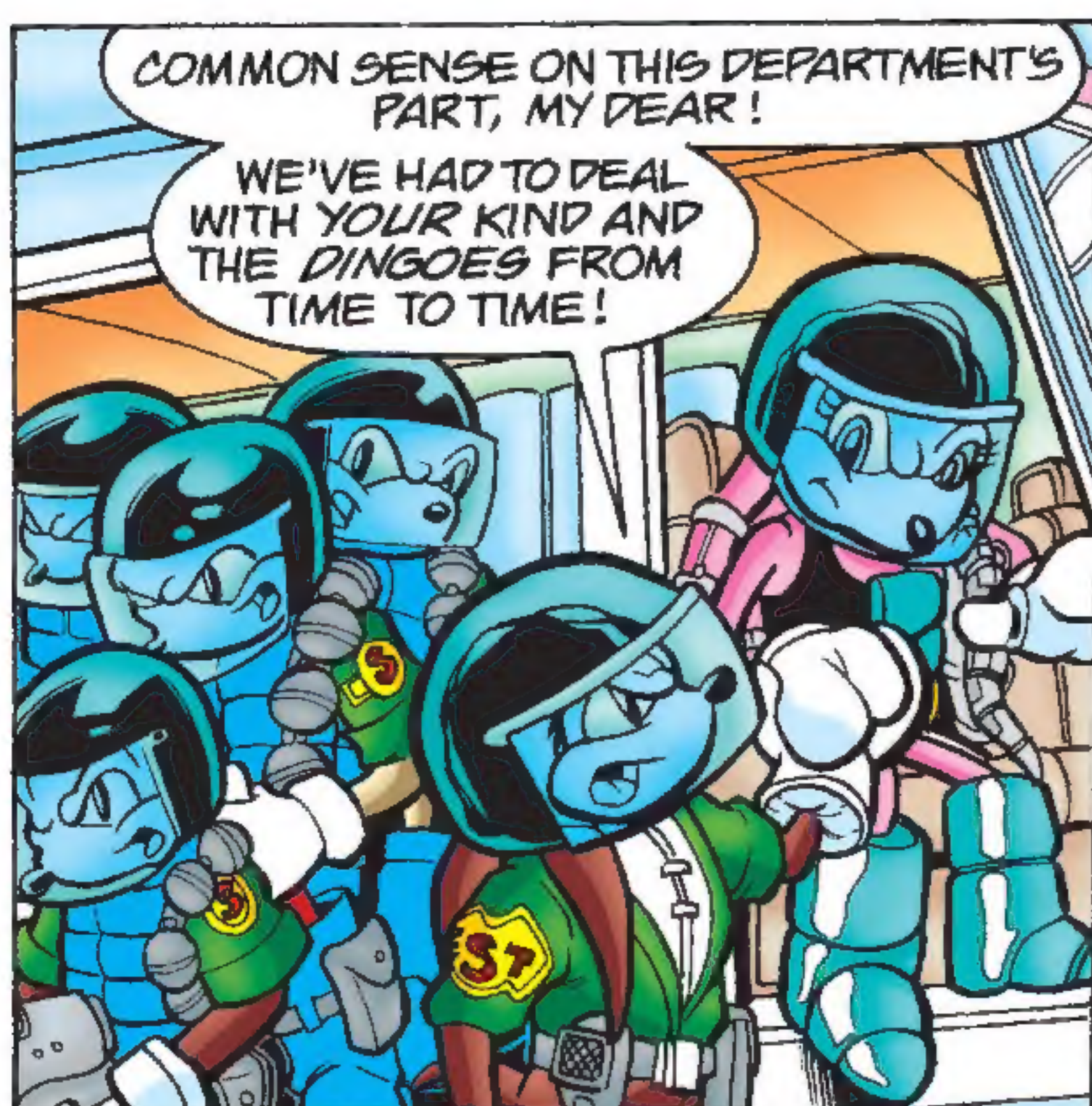
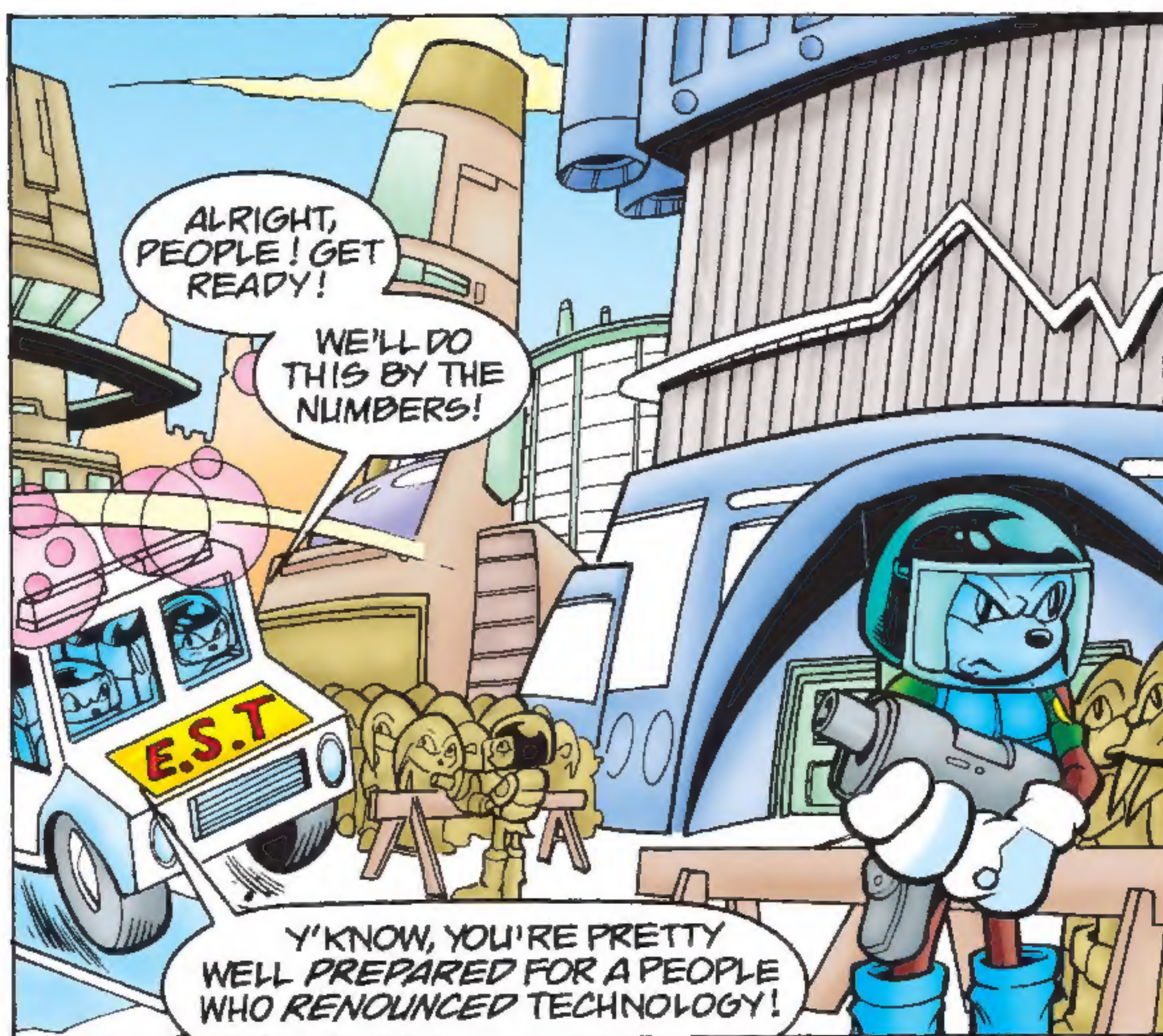
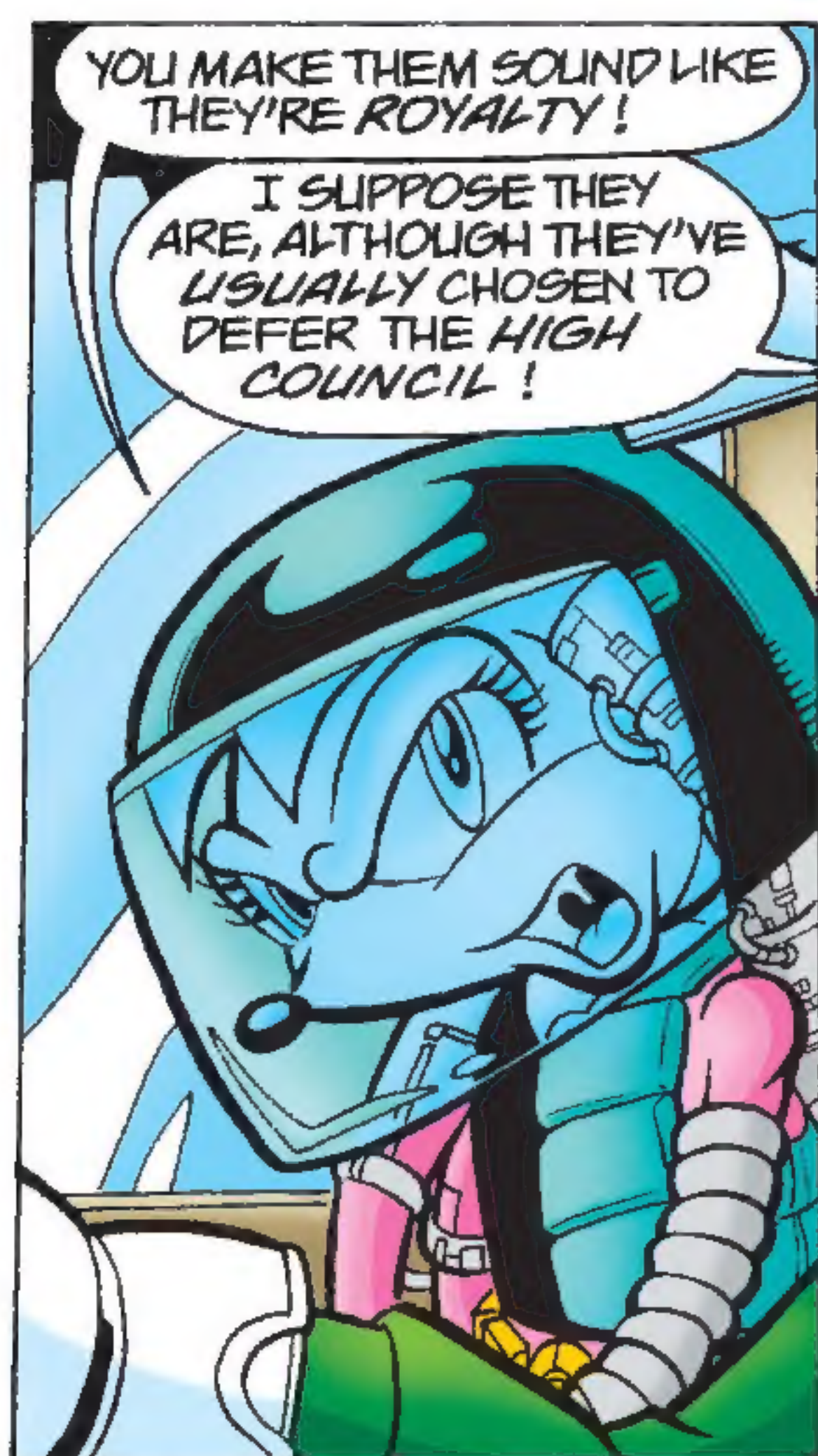
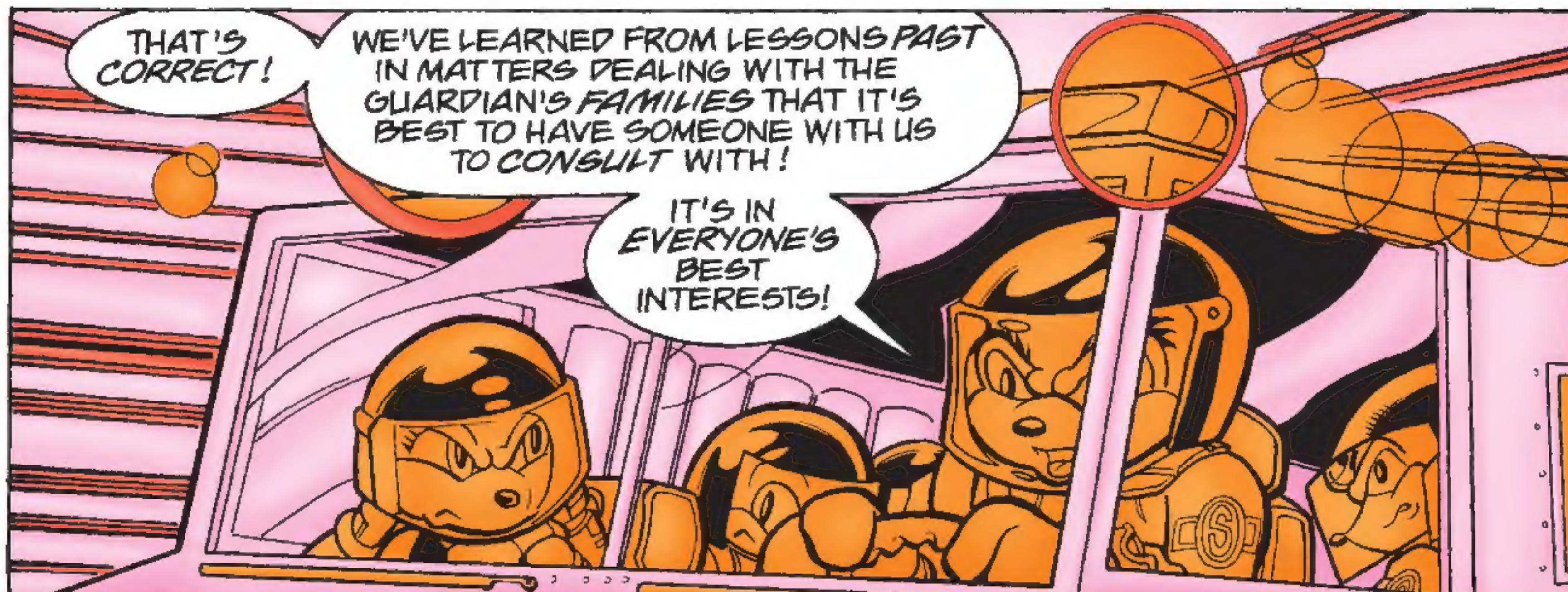
WOW!

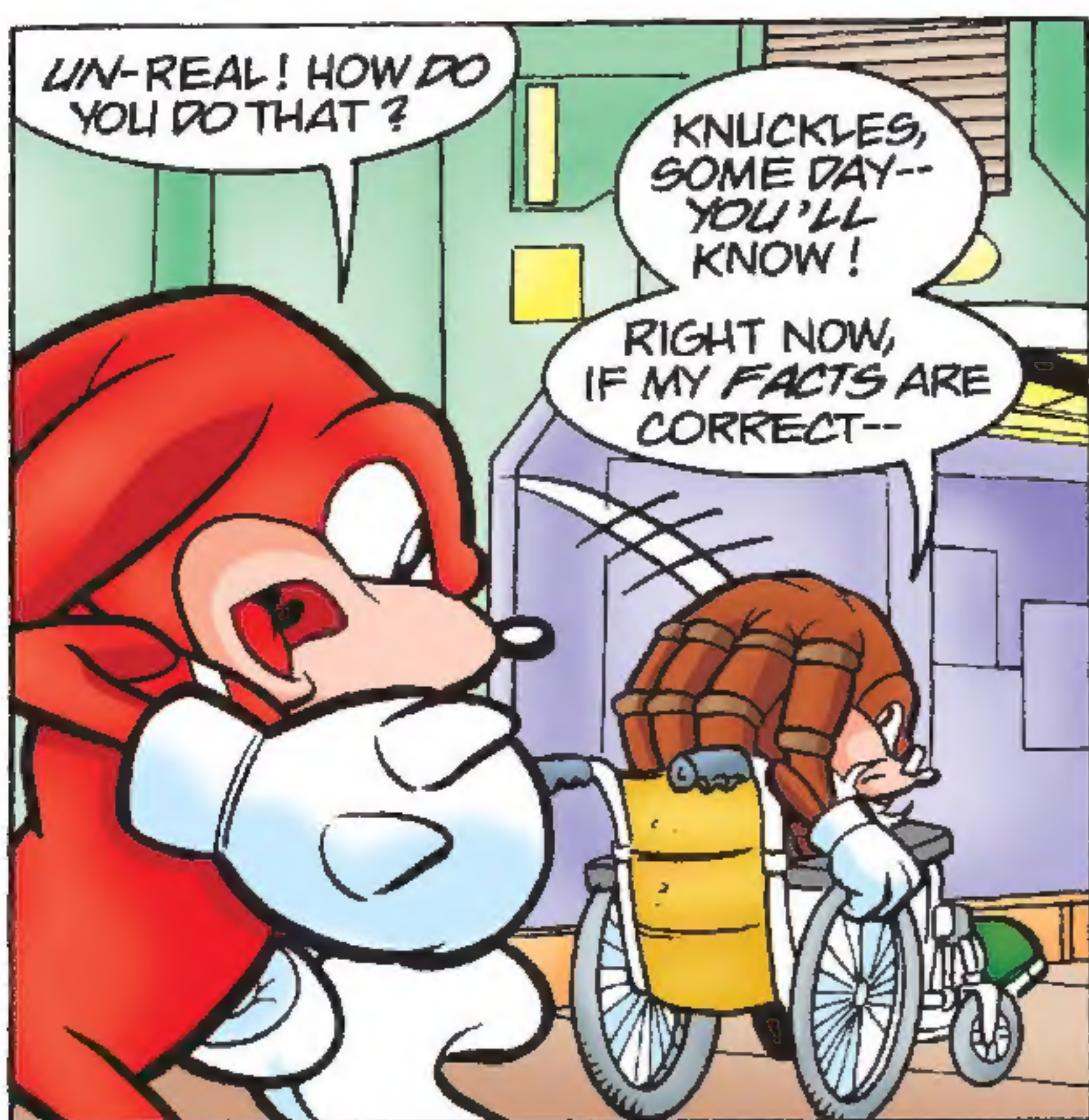
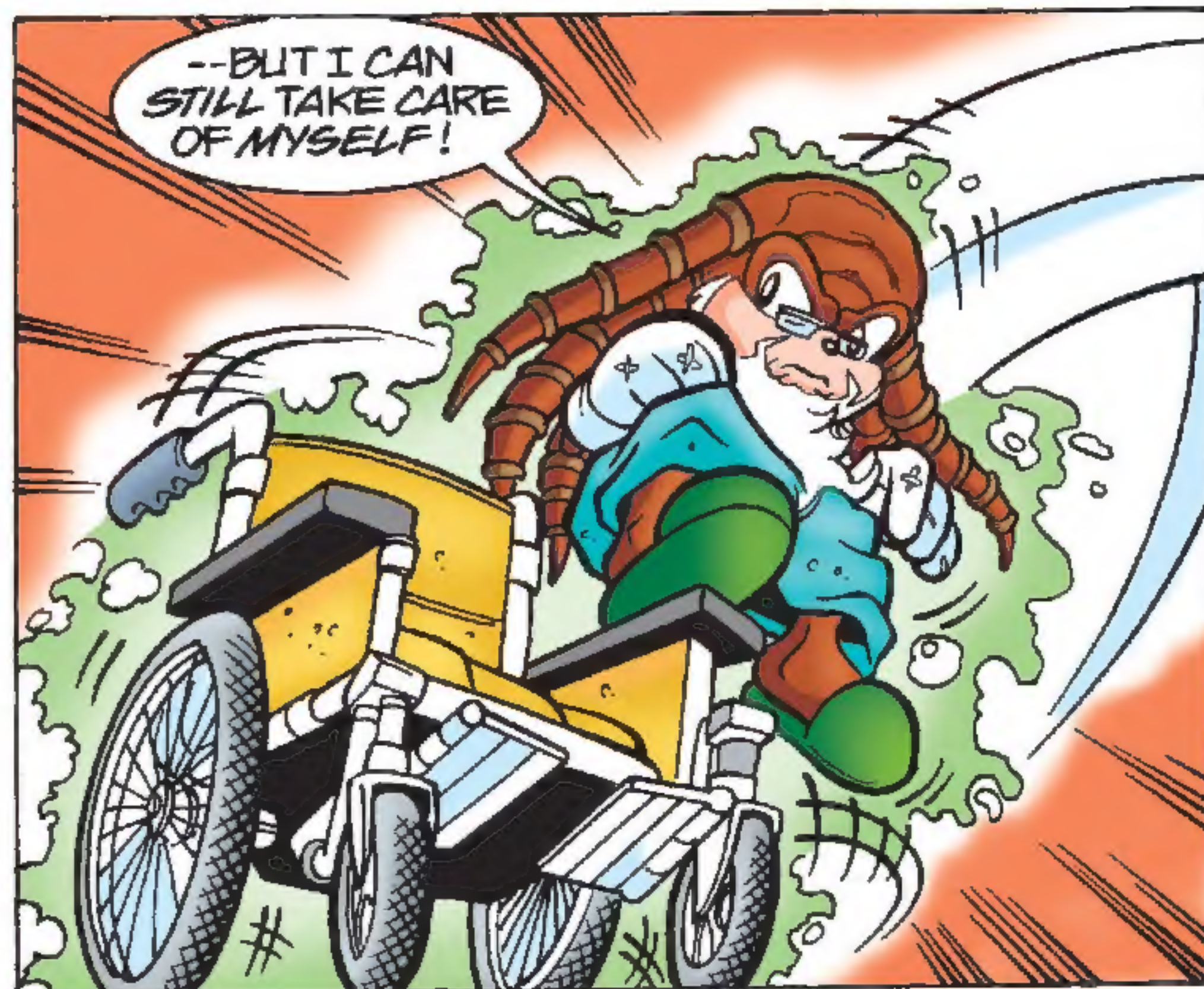
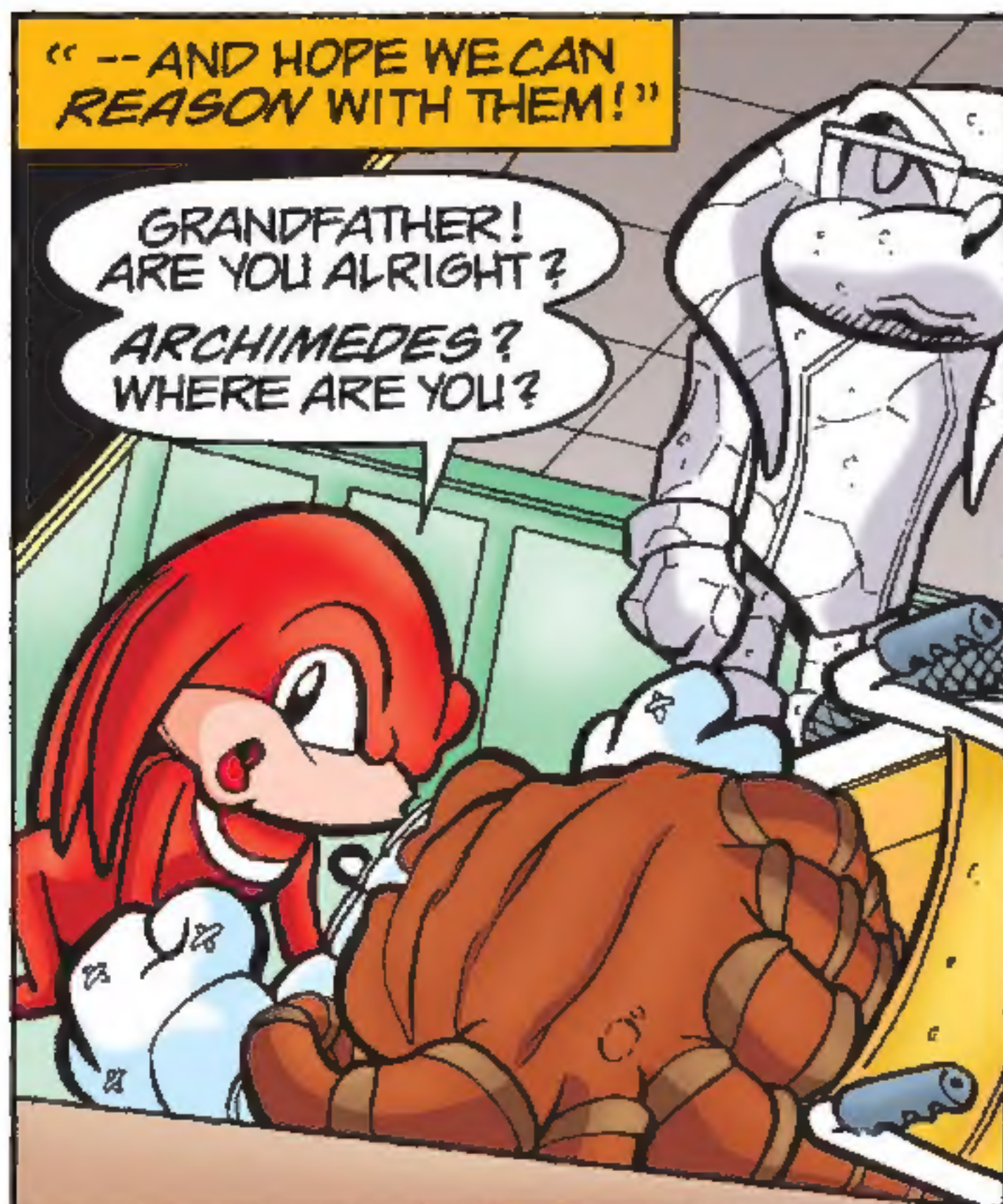














WORSE

THAN THAT!

THEY'VE
GOT MY
MOTHER!

LIVE AT
ECHIDNA
TOWERS

STAY
CALM
LAD!

I'M
SURE THERE'S
A PLAN!

YOU BETTER
BELIEVE IT!

THE
QUESTION
BEFORE US,
KNUCKLES--

--IS WHETHER
YOU'RE READY TO
HANDLE IT!

**TO BE
CONTINUED!**